

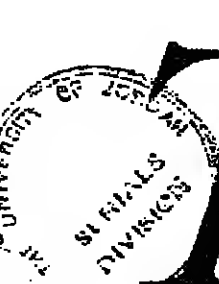
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Interview by Katharine Viner

Boycott on runs, money, sex and violence

G2 with European weather



Linda Grant

Why has prostitution become cool?

G2 page 7

Education

The woman taking on the toughest tasks

G2 pages 12-13



Maggie O'Kane reports from Baghdad

Under the shadow of the bomb



Abu Ziad lost his wife and four children in the bombing



Girls pray at the Amirya bomb shelter in Baghdad where more than 400 civilians died in an allied air strike in February 1991. PHOTOGRAPH: ENRIC MARTI

ON HIS table lies an old, yellowing book, *The Complete Guide to Letter Writing*, the remains of last night's dinner and an Iraqi mandolin that he is teaching himself to play to pass the days. Before the Gulf war, he was an accountant with the Iraqi Oil Company, with five children, a smattering of English and a large house near a bomb shelter. Now, Abu Ziad lives behind drawn curtains in Dora, a grubby suburb of Baghdad. His neighbours look after him, cook his rice dinners and send glasses of orange juice for his occasional guest. Sometimes, he washes and shaves, mostly he does not, and once a month, for the last seven years, he has injected himself with Midecortin — an anti-depressant drug. He was a shy young man who married when he was

aged 38. Haifa was aged 23 and pretty. Their children came quickly: Ziad, Zena, Fuad, Lena and Sadaad. During the Iran-Iraq war, when nearly 1 million young men died on each side, he remembers the sounds of women wailing in the night for another lost son, husband or lover. He remembers thanking God that he married late, and that his children were too young to be sent to fight. Then, three years after that war, President Saddam Hussein led them into another. At 2am on February 13, 1991, two bombs hit the Amirya bomb shelter near his home. The first was a drilling bomb that pierced the roof, slicing into the central heating tank and sending gallons of boiling water pouring over the women and children below, who were playing dominoes, watching Tom and Jerry videos and eating kebabs. The second bomb, 15 min-

utes later, exploded with such force that he never had the chance to identify the bodies of his wife and four of their five children: Zena, aged 14; Fuad, aged 12; Lena, aged seven; and Sadaad, aged six. "I saw a body being brought out then I saw it was Zena's, but they were piling them on top of each other and I couldn't see if it was her. We weren't allowed to go close." He remembers standing outside the shelter in the early morning and noticing the ankles of the dead women and children marked by the red hot mattress springs they had fought to climb over to get out of the shelter before the second bomb dropped. All the doors had been locked. Abu Ziad does not know if war will come again, and does not seem to care. "I do not want more victims to be added, or for history to repeat itself," he says. "Personally, I don't fear anything." Seven months ago his first

grandson was born to his only surviving child, Ziad. He named the boy Fuad, after his dead son. "It's only then I'm worried about," he says. "For myself, whether I'm dead or alive, it's the same for me." The sun is shining in Baghdad and there is calm. In the Bilal el Shuhadaa primary school, the headmaster, Abdul al-Husseini, says he will not close the school if war breaks out. He is fluent in Saddam's Arabic. "The Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party in Iraq and its patriotic leader, Saddam Hussein, will continue the struggle against American colonialism and imperialism. We will rise victorious against our aggressors. As our great leadership has said, there are no chemical and biological weapons in our country. The American president is part of a Zionist plot to destroy Iraq. And so on and so forth..." In his school the first-year class — seven-year-olds born

in the year of the first Gulf war — scrape back their chairs and rise to their feet with the words they greet all visitors with: "Long live our great leader, Saddam Hussein." "Saddam will make Iraqi bombs go to America and we will emerge victorious," says Mustapha, who was born a month before the 1991 war began. "And who won the last Gulf war?" "We did," he says. His mother, Montaha Ali, teaches in the school. "We believe in God and what will happen to us has already been written. But we are afraid for our children because maybe they are going to drop a nuclear bomb on us," she says. In the grey concrete block

that houses the ministry of information, a six-man crew from China state television has just set up shop, amid the hundreds of satellite dishes from international television crews crowding the forecourt. The Iraqis watching them, who have suffered two air strikes since the Gulf war, seem weary and blasé, with a combination of defiance, righteousness and indifference. "We have no chemical weapons. This is a plot run by the Israelis and the Jews in America," says Abdul al-Sumariya, an electrician. "Mona Lewinsky is Jewish and they are blackmailing Clinton with a new scandal to make him hit us." "It's not only her — defence turn to page 2, column 7



UN envoys work on compromise

FRENCH president Jacques Chirac said last night a negotiated solution to the crisis was "technically" possible, as United Nations Security Council ambassadors met in New York to finalise a package the UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan, could take to Baghdad, writes Ian Black. Envoys of the five permanent council members — Britain, the United States, France, Russia and China — were said to be close to agreeing a deal whereby diplomats from the council would accompany UN inspectors to sensitive sites Iraq has declared off-limits. It was unclear whether Baghdad would accept.

Iraq crisis, page 7; Analysis, page 11; Leader comment, page 8; Harold Pinter, page 9

Adams fury at talks ban

Fears for IRA ceasefire as Sinn Fein pledges legal challenge

John Mulholland
Ireland Correspondent

GERRY Adams was furious last night as he saw Sinn Fein's place at the negotiating table on Northern Ireland's future slipping away. The Government earlier began the process of ejecting the party from the talks after two IRA killings last week. Mr Adams said: "We tried to make this thing work and those who have no interest in making it work seize on two men being killed to exploit it and bring this process down." It may be tomorrow before the election procedure is exhausted, and the party is vowing to mount a legal battle to stay in the talks. Senior figures doubt whether they can influence the IRA to keep to its ceasefire if the party is suspended, probably for as little as three weeks. There were signs of dis-

agreement between the British and Irish governments. The British alone called on Sinn Fein to be excluded, although the Irish are expected to support the move. Mo Mowlam, Northern Ireland Secretary, forwarded the indictment after Ronnie Flanagan, RUC chief constable, linked the IRA to two murders in Belfast last week. It ran to seven paragraphs, but detailed no evidence demonstrating IRA involvement. Mr Adams asked whether Ms Mowlam had demanded an assessment from Mr Flanagan on the murders of two Catholics last month immediately after the Ulster Freedom Fighters restored their ceasefire. No organisation claimed responsibility, and the UFF is suspected. Ms Mowlam was forced to admit that she had made no such request. Sinn Fein said that meant Catholics were being treated as second-class citizens. Fledgling sub-judge, Ms Mowlam said she was unable

to outline details of the second killing, that of Ulster Defence Association member Bobby Dougan. Three men appeared in court yesterday charged with his murder. None was charged with IRA membership. Police sources last week described them as IRA suspects. Martin McGuinness, Sinn Fein's chief negotiator, said of the indictment: "This is a charade. It amounts to a kangaroo court. We are seeing a lynch mob of Ulster Unionists led by the British government." Mr McGuinness denied that the party, which has gained little from negotiations, was interested in an exit strategy. He believed the IRA ceasefire was intact. But he emphasised that Sinn Fein spoke only for its voters. The murders in Belfast last week of Catholic drugs dealer Brendan Campbell, 30, and loyalist Bobby Dougan, 38, precipitated Sinn Fein's imminent suspension. Despite the party's denials of a link, Sinn Fein won its place in the negotiations only after the IRA restored its ceasefire last July.

Guinness makes comic bitter

Dan Gleister
Arts Correspondent

GUINNESS is good for you, runs the age old slogan accompanying the drinks giant's advertising. But if you are a recovering alcoholic, the black stuff can spell commercial doom. Comedian Owen O'Neill, who has won acclaim and awards for his one-man show *Off My Face*, was delighted to be invited to make two appearances at the Manchester Irish Festival next month. But the festival's main sponsors, Guinness, were less than happy when they discovered his show was a moving account of his struggle with alcoholism. Alcoholism and alcohol, the sponsors decided, do not go together. "I couldn't believe it," said O'Neill yesterday. "I don't even mention Guinness, although I do mention stout. My show would have the opposite effect. People who come and see it probably need a drink after-



Owen O'Neill: 'People need a drink after my show'

wards. Where's it going to end? Will tobacco companies stop plays about cancer? Off My Face was premiered at the Edinburgh Festival last year and has toured the country since last autumn. A festival spokesman said: "Guinness decided they didn't want to put their money next to the gig." It was too late to find

additional sponsors. "We felt it wasn't viable gig." Guinness has always been an incredibly good sponsor and have never interfered with the programme, but they felt that a drinks company sponsoring a show about alcoholism didn't work. A spokesman for the Association of Business Sponsorship for the Arts said it would disapprove of censorship if a show was part of a package which a company was contracted to sponsor. "But companies have the right to choose carefully what projects they support." Business sponsorship of the arts reached £95.9 million last year against £260,000 in 1976. The Manchester Irish Festival, which runs from March 7-17, features comedy, music, film, literature, dance and sport. Last November O'Neill was in Dublin's Ungagged Comedy Festival. This was sponsored by Murphy's — the pretender to Guinness's crown. They managed to see the joke.

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Sketch

You avocado mousse be joking



Simon Hoggart

ACCORDING to the papers, Peter Mandelson has been advising the Prince of Wales on public relations.

He seems a jolly peculiar choice. Asking Mandy how to be popular is like asking Paul Gascoigne how to keep the romance in your marriage, or Michael Winner for etiquette hints. "My hair is all over the place, and I can't do a thing with it. What's your advice please, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall?"

No wonder the latest polls show that, on the Queen's death, 49 per cent of the population would prefer to skip straight to King William.

Not only is he bad at being popular, Mr Mandelson seems to relish encouraging his own unpopularity. Take yesterday's session on the Millennium Dome. This has been doubled in length, so that the minister, thought by some to be the second most powerful man in Britain, now answers questions for 10 minutes.

Austin Mitchell (Lab, Gtms) inquired what the regional content of the dome would be. He hoped that this would go beyond "fish and chips and avocado mousse". He also hoped the gigantic figure now planned for the dome would "not become the Angel of the South (a reference to the Angel of the North statue), which, being androgynous, might be what will happen to it."

Mr Mitchell pleaded with Mandy to stay in his present job and not, he left unsaid, but implied, waltz off to a cabinet post. "Nobody has a better chance of making a success of

it than you — and nobody of telling us it has been a success if it isn't."

Mr Mitchell's intervention contained two and possibly three digs at Mr Mandelson. The last was obvious, the line about androgyny a possible barb, and the mention of avocado mousse a definite thrust.

This is based on the story of Mandy dining in his constituency of Harlepool, pointing to the mushy peas and asking for "the avocado mousse, please." (In some versions it's guacamole dip, but that doesn't matter as it was all invented by Neil Kinnock.)

Now Mr Mitchell was being a bit tart, but Austin is like that to everyone. So Mandy replied, slyly and sleekly: "I am sure that my right honourable friend — stressed meaningfully — the Prime Minister, will listen to your advice on this, as he does on so many other matters."

Oof. The message was in letters higher than the status: "You are a backbencher and your views don't count at all. But mine do."

Mr Mandelson cannot see an opponent without turning him into an enemy.

At one point he denied that BT was pulling £12 million out of the dome. He had called the chairman, who had flatly denied it. ("I'm sorry, Mr Mandelson, this is an awful line.") He supposed that this support came because BT is "a company of the future, confident and vibrant, like the New Britain." That's the kind of old-fashioned PR Mandy likes, and worth £12 million of anyone's money.

During his short appearance, he was asked nine questions. Not one was remotely sympathetic. He cannot find a single MP to stand up and support him. For the uncrowned king of political PR it was a remarkable coup.

The Tory spokesman, Francis Maude, said that the dome had been a "presentational disaster." Mandy's tongue got in a twist: "I don't accept that it is a presentational disaster." Perhaps he meant, in American slang, that it sucks.

Review

Triumph for the ghost of Elgar

Andrew Clements

Elgar's Third Symphony
BBC Symphony Orchestra/
Royal Festival Hall

EDWARD Elgar's descendants took a brave step when they agreed to Anthony Payne's making an "elaboration" of the sketches for the Third Symphony, and there could not have been a more triumphant vindication of their boldness than the first public performance of the score, which ended with a standing ovation for Payne, Andrew Davis and the orchestra.

No one pretends that the result is unadorned Elgar, though some passages incoherently are. But what we can hear is a wonderfully satisfying symphonic structure, with the emotional sweep and bittersweet flavour of the real composer in every bar. The bare bones of the first movement were established by Elgar, though the development section had to be invented; so was almost all of the scherzo second movement. But only the opening section of the slow movement was written down, and when it came to the finale, all that Payne had to work with was a

handful of themes. Relying on a mixture of deduction and a composer's intuition Payne made his decisions, and what he has come up with is never less than convincing.

The structure certainly has a breadth and natural pacing that are unmistakably Elgarian. The best tunes are as memorable as anything in the established works.

In his final years, Elgar was also working on his first opera (also left unfinished), and it is reasonable to suppose that he studied other composers' stage works when writing his own. Perhaps that accounts for the flavour of Puccini at several points.

We like to think of Elgar as an unadorned romantic, but in fact he lived through the most tumultuous period in the history of music: born a year after Schumann died, he died in the year that Bartók was born.

Perhaps at the end of life some of those changes started to seep into his own music, and perhaps, had he lived to complete this work, they would have been more apparent. But for what we are now able to hear of them, everyone should be hugely grateful to Anthony Payne. This review appeared in some editions yesterday.



A rescue worker scrambles through the wreckage of China Airlines Flight C1676, while colleagues search homes near Taipei airport hit by the blazing Airbus PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON KWONG

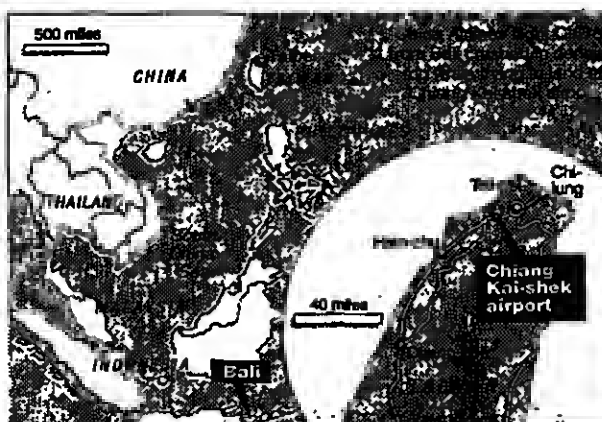
200 die in Airbus inferno

Taipei disaster blamed on fog

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

ALL 197 passengers and crew aboard a flight from the Indonesian resort of Bali were feared dead last night after their Airbus crashed at Taipei international airport, ploughing through a perimeter wall and pulverising houses.

At least two people died in homes obliterated by the blazing aircraft, officials said.



On board the China Airlines Airbus A300-600R were the governor of Taiwan's central bank, Hsu Yuan-tung, his wife, and three bank officials. They were returning from a conference in Bali on Asia's economic woes. Most of the dead were returning Taiwanese holiday-makers.

The aircraft crashed in thick fog on a second attempt to land at Chiang Kai-shek international airport. "Visibility was extremely bad," an airline spokesman told reporters. "The pilot said he was having trouble seeing the runway as he made his approach and asked to come around for another try."

"Immediately after he asked for another try, the pilot lost contact with the tower at 8.05," he said.

Flaming wreckage was scattered over a wide area, obliterating sections of a coastal highway alongside the airport. "In view of the gravity of the situation, it would be very difficult for anyone to survive," said Wei Shun-chih, the airport's deputy director.

A resident in one of the homes hit by the plane said from hospital last night that he was watching television when the roof fell in and the



Grieving relatives comfort each other PHOTOGRAPH: EDDIE CHENG

lights went out. A boy, aged 10, was plucked from a wrecked home but died in hospital. However, rescue workers found an infant alive in the ruins.

A weeping woman wailed outside another destroyed home: "There were people inside," she screamed. "Everything is finished."

It was the second crash of an Airbus originating in Indonesia since last September, when 234 people died in a crash on Sumatra. That plane went down during forest fires that had reduced visibility.

Television footage showed blazing brick buildings and the shattered carcass of China Airlines Flight C1676. The disaster occurred as families in nearby homes were finishing their evening meal. "First I heard a great explosion and then the sky suddenly brightened," said a witness aged 60.

Taiwan's Central News Agency likened the crash to an April 1994 disaster at Japan's Nagoya airport, involving another China Airlines A300-600R. More than 260 people died then when the plane crashed while turning for another attempt after an aborted landing.

Yesterday's crash delivers a grave blow to an industry that has been battered by Asia's economic meltdown. The slump has slashed passenger levels and stirred concern that cost-cutting by airlines could threaten safety.

Murdoch funds Oxford media chair

John Carvel Education Editor

OXFORD University yesterday extended its debt of gratitude to a former student, Rupert Murdoch, when it announced the appointment of its first professor of broadcasting, funded out of a £3.1 million benefaction from his News International media empire.

David Elstein, aged 53, chief executive of Channel 5, is to take up the News International Visiting Professorship in Broadcast Media for the academic year 1998/99. He said he would give a series of five lectures and two seminars early next year on the theme of "the

changing perception of the role of television in post-war society."

His own perceptions changed soon after delivering the 1991 James McGarrigle Memorial Lecture at the Edinburgh Television Festival, at which he put the boot into Mr Murdoch and the threat to quality broadcasting allegedly posed by Sky TV. Two years later, he became head of programmes at BSkyB, and one of Mr Murdoch's staunchest defenders.

After graduating with a first-class degree from Cambridge at the age of 19, he accepted a scholarship at Oxford with a view to a PhD. But when he was told he would not be taught by the director of studies he wanted, he joined the BBC.



David Elstein: a change in his perceptions

He subsequently became a key figure at Thames TV. He returns to Oxford thanks to the £3.1 million benefaction which News International gave to the university's English faculty in 1990. It has already funded the Rupert Murdoch Professorship of Language and Communication, currently held by Jean Aitchison, as well as three Times lectureships and a £500,000 research grant.

The university said the visiting chair of broadcasting was initially being set up for five years and would rotate among leading practitioners from the broadcast media.

The English faculty has recently extended its undergraduate syllabus to offer an option on language, film and the media.

A spokeswoman said she could not release information on Mr Elstein's stipend from the benefaction.

Seven years on, grieving Abu lives under bomb shadow

continued from page 1

secretary (William) Cohen is Jewish and [secretary of state] Madeleine Albright has Jewish relatives."

The Jewish lobby in the United States controls Clinton," adds Faris Hamdoun, a university lecturer, aged 52.

In the hotel lift, a Syrian businessman now living in Brussels, thumps the breast pocket of his expensive dark blue suit. "This is striking at the honour of all Arabs. They didn't do this in Bosnia and they won't do this against Israel. They are driving us back to fundamentalism. We hate the Americans and we hate your Mr Blair."

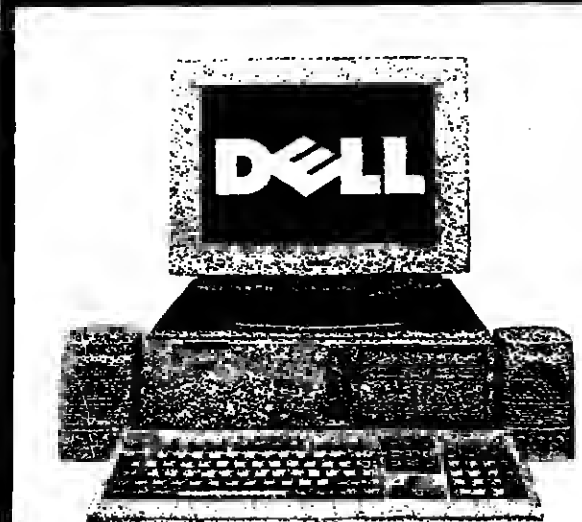
In the early morning, Iraqi defences gear up. Three pick-up trucks drive southwards, each carrying a 20ft missile, its nose striped with

red. The only other sign of the force that is to "emerge victorious" are two gunners on the back of a Jeep, with an old machine gun pointing towards the sky.

Out in his suburb Abu Ziad, is left with his mandolin; his Complete Guide to Letter Writing and the photographs of his children that he keeps in an album covered with red and green lilies.

"I kept their schoolbooks — that's all. Sometimes when I'm here on my own, I talk to them still and I add the last seven years since they died and imagine them all grown up. I don't wish I'd done anything different. We were a happy family. Except I have a picture of Zena, just before she died. In it I'm standing beside her and when I look at it, I wish I had hugged her."

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'I did not consent to filming'

Art scam leads widow to test of privacy

BBC

BBC faces landmark action over film of police raid on home of 81-year-old. **Clare Dyer reports**

THE BBC will go to the High Court today to resist a claim which lawyers believe could be the first to establish a right of privacy in English law.

Frances Jarvis, an 81-year-old widow who is suing the corporation and two police forces over a televised raid on her home, is seeking the court's go-ahead to make the first claim for breach of a right of privacy.

In a hearing behind closed doors, her lawyers will ask the court to allow them to amend papers in the case to include a claim for breach of confidence.

This would allege that the BBC and Touch Productions, the film crew which accompanied the police, owed her a duty of confidence, including a duty "not to violate her right to respect for her private life and her home."

Lawyers for the corporation argue that the claim should not go ahead because at present English law confers no right to privacy.

Such a right will not become part of English law until the Human Rights Bill, now going through Parliament, becomes law, probably in April 1999.

Mrs Jarvis, represented by the leading human rights lawyer Lord Lester QC, is suing the BBC, Touch Productions, the Metropolitan Police, and Devon and Cornwall Constabulary over an early morning raid on her home near Bideford, Devon, in July 1994.

Police, armed with a search warrant, were looking for evidence implicating her son, Jonathan Tokeley-Parry, in a racket to smuggle priceless ancient artefacts out of Egypt. The film crew wanted to film the raid for an Inside Story documentary. The Art Detectives.

She claims she did not consent to the filming by Touch Productions as the BBC's

agent. She says she assumed the cameramen were filming the search on behalf of the police. The BBC and the film company insist she consented.

When she learned the film was to be broadcast, Mrs Jarvis consulted solicitors, who told her she would not be able to get an injunction to stop it.

They asked the BBC not to show the footage, but the corporation broadcast the film on television in Britain in June 1995.

Broadcast rights were sold in a number of other countries and the film was shown on Singapore Airlines.

She changed solicitors and started legal action. Philip Barden, a partner in the London firm Devonshires, which now represents Mrs Jarvis, said: "This is the first opportunity the courts have had to bring in a much needed law of privacy."

"You can't have a much more fundamental breach than this."

Success in her breach of confidence claim would open the way for her to claim damages equivalent to the profits the BBC made from the documentary.

If she succeeds, it could spell the end of joint police and camera raids on private premises. Judges in the US have condemned the practice recently gave the go-ahead for a \$10 million lawsuit against CNN and the US Fish and Wildlife Service over a 1993 raid on a Montana ranch where the service suspected that eagles were being poisoned.

Tokeley-Parry, aged 46, was convicted of handling stolen property at Knightsbridge crown court last June, and is serving a six-year sentence. A Cambridge graduate and restorer of antiquities, he was alleged to have masterminded a racket importing 5,000-year-

old artefacts disguised as tourist trinkets.

He was convicted of handling stolen pieces of a false door from the tomb of the pharaoh's hairdresser, Hepheka, and a stolen figure of a falcon god, Horus.

Mrs Jarvis, who was abused as a child and suffers from depression, has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder after the raid. The writ says she contemplated suicide and felt unable to live in her home for several months afterwards.

Senior judges, including the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham, have signalled willingness to develop the law on breach of confidence into a full-fledged privacy law, if the

right cases come before them. The claim brought by Diana, Princess of Wales, over sneak photographs of her in a gym could have been such a case, but it was settled out of court.

The Human Rights Bill spells out a right of privacy in statute for the first time. But there is nothing to stop judges developing such a right through case law before the act comes into force.

A spokesman for ACPO, the Association of Chief Police Officers, said raids accompanied by media were uncommon.

Guidelines covering such cases point out that entry and filming on private premises are lawful only with the consent of the occupier.



Martha Gellhorn: fierce sense of justice

War reporter Gellhorn dies at 89

She was married to Hemingway and covered the D-Day landings

Clare Longrigg

ONE OF the century's greatest war correspondents, Martha Gellhorn, has died at the age of 89.

The American-born Gellhorn was one of the most outspoken and fearless reporters of world events, which she reported with a burning sense of injustice.

She was married to Ernest Hemingway for five years, from 1939 until 1944, and shared his sense of adventure, reporting from Haiti, Vietnam, Cuba, and many other countries.

During the second world war, she crossed the channel with allied troops on D-Day.

She was also the author of five novels and two collections of short stories. Volumes of her journalism and travel writing are still in print.

Yesterday the journalist John Pilger paid tribute to her as one of a dying breed: "She was undoubtedly one of the greatest of all war correspondents, if not the greatest, because she reported wars from the point of view of people, not power."

"She had a passion and anger about the world, and was still engaged last Friday when we had a spirited discussion about Iraq. She refused to write about anything she hadn't seen for herself."

"Just a couple of years ago, she was sitting in the back of a police car in Rio de Janeiro, writing about the kids discarded on the streets."

Bill Buford, literary editor of the New Yorker, said yesterday: "Her travel writing was characterised by a high moral purpose and an overwhelming sense of justice. At the heart of her writing was a sense of rage occasioned by

Latterly Gellhorn divided her time between a small cottage in Wales and a busy social life in London.

Mr Buford added: "She was amazing. She was nearly 90, smoked like a chimney and drank like a fish, and well into her 80s, with her high cheekbones, she could flirt as easily as women 50 years younger."

Jeremy Harding, who made a TV documentary on Gellhorn, said yesterday: "She was a superb warrior. She was always furious but never self-righteous. She despised what she called lack of imagination, particularly in politicians."

"She saw it as the root of bad government, whether it was arms sales or appeasement to dictators. From Spain in the 1930s to Latin America in the 1960s, she looked the century in the face."

"At the same time, she was one of the most amusing people you could hope to meet. She had friends of all ages."

Obituary, page 10

"We are in the 1990s time-war. Women have seized the opportunity to earn the same as or more than men, but there is a tape playing in their minds, telling them that their dad worked and their mum stayed at home looking after the kids. Clare Longrigg on the root of all evil in relationships"

G2 page 4



Frances Jarvis with her son, Jonathan Tokeley-Parry, at her home in Bideford, Devon

PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD LAPPAS

Straw tries to thwart 'back door' tactics

Michael White and Lucy Ward

NEWSPAPERS and broadcasters were divided last night in their response to proposals by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, to amend the Government's Human Rights Bill. Mr Straw claimed his move would obviate a privacy law at the expense of legitimate freedom of expression.

Ministers have produced a formula intended to head off both pre-publication injunctions and the creation of legislation by judges determined to extend privacy rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic law.

But Downing Street officials last night stressed that the amendments promised by Mr Straw as he moved the Commons second reading of the Human Rights Bill will also force the media to take much more seriously the self-regulatory code enforced via the Press Complaints Commission (PCC).

The alternative option canvassed, to amend the bill so as to render the PCC a private rather than public body, would have solved the narrow problem of media liability. But it would also have allowed judges considerable latitude to create a privacy tort in common law.

The PCC formally welcomed the Government's decision last night. It was finalised at a meeting at Heathrow airport on Friday between three lawyers: Mr Straw, Tory ex-cabinet minister and PCC chairman Lord Wakeham, and junior Home Office minister and former Bar Council chairman, Lord Williams of Mostyn.

Ironically, it was the controversial remarks of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, about the possibility of backdoor privacy laws and actions for prior restraint, both of which he opposed, which galvanised ministers to act after months of hesitation. Despite Tory jibes, officials said Lord

Irvine was supporting the deal.

The key to yesterday's compromise is the Government's willingness to amend the bill on three sensitive points.

- It will prevent a litigant obtaining a prior restraint injunction *ex parte*.
- It will include an explicit statement that courts must give higher priority to freedom of expression when it clashes with respect for private life.
- It will place a requirement on courts to take into account the public interest in the publication of information, coupled with a judgment as to whether the newspaper had acted "fairly and reasonably" within the provisions of the PCC Code of Practice.

The crucial calculation by ministers is that newspapers, especially tabloids which routinely intrude on private grief with little public justification, will only be safe from privacy complaints or injunction if they can convince a court that they have acted within PCC guidelines.

Last night editors and Tory MPs were waiting for exact details of the amendments. Alan Rusbridger, editor of the Guardian, said last night: "We will have to see the final wording of any amendment. But, on the face of it, this seems no more than vague wordplay. Judges will apparently be left to develop a privacy law with new words such as 'fair' and 'reasonable' to play with."

A spokesman for the independent newspaper said the proposals were "half-baked" and had gone off at "half-cock". The Government should have come forward with a new law on privacy alongside a significantly reformed law of libel and a right to investigate public figures.

However, the News International group, which includes the Times, Sunday Times, the Sun and News of the World, said in a statement: "The whole industry will be pleased that the Government is taking the media's legitimate concerns seriously and is moving to protect freedom of expression in this way."

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Ex-detective dies after Kenya mugging



UK tourists murdered abroad since 1985:

- US - 71
- South Africa - 55
- Spain - 58
- Australia - 27
- France - 25
- Kenya - 19
- Philippines - 18
- Germany - 17
- Netherlands - 17
- Zimbabwe - 16
- Thailand - 13
- Jamaica - 12
- Portugal - 11

Holiday Briton stabbed to death



The Aberdare country club, where the couple were attacked. Top left, Kenya's tourism minister, Henry Kosgey, announcing a reward for conviction of killers PHOTOGRAPH: ANTONY NUGUNA

Owen Bowcott

A FORMER Scotland Yard detective has died after being stabbed in front of his wife when two robbers snatched their video camera as they strolled through a private game sanctuary in Kenya.

Roy Chivers, 51, who served

with the Metropolitan police, was on holiday in the Aberdare country club, 140 miles north of Nairobi. His wife, Sandra, 50, was slightly hurt. The attack occurred early on Sunday as the couple, from Orpington, Kent, set out to view wild game. One of the men drew a knife and demanded their camera.

Kenya's tourism minister, Henry Kosgey, said: "Mr

Chivers tried to fight them and he was stabbed in the chest. His wife was also struggling to stop the attack and she was cut on the hand."

A party of guests out riding raised the alarm after finding Mrs Chivers cradling her husband. They were taken to hospital and a flying ambulance was called to a nearby airstrip.

"Unfortunately, on admis-

sions have led to a sharp fall in the number of visitors. Tourists have frequently been mugged in the main cities, but there have been several reports recently of attacks in game parks. The figure for overseas visitors has fallen from 864,000 in 1994 to 600,000 last year. Tourism is the largest source of Kenya's hard currency earnings after coffee and tea exports.

Mrs Chivers is being comforted by British embassy officials. The country club, owned by the Louro Group, is a 60-room lodge built 27 years ago around a European settler's ranch. There is a golf course and a private 1,300-acre game sanctuary.

Mr Chivers retired from SO11, Scotland Yard's criminal intelligence department,

two years ago. He had since worked as a security official at the Bank of England. A spokesman said: "He was greatly liked and respected. We are all deeply shocked by the news."

A family friend described him as a "lovely man". The couple had been looking forward to their holiday. "It was meant to have been the trip of a lifetime. It is an absolute tragedy."

Another friend, PC David Waters, said Mr Chivers's son and daughter, Stephen, 20, and Helen, 24, would fly to Nairobi. "The family do not want to speak at the moment. They are devastated by what has happened. He was a lovely bloke who had a great sense of humour. We had some really good laughs together," said Mr Waters.

Countryside campaigners bridle at public access defeat

Stuart Miller

COUNTRYSIDE campaigners yesterday demanded a change in the law after a High Court judge backed the right of landowners to refuse access to land which had been open to the public for generations.

Mr Justice Sullivan rejected an attempt to have eight tracks through woodland on Rammore Common,

Surrey, officially confirmed as bridleways to guarantee the public's right of access.

Although the tracks had been open to the public for "air and exercise" since 1929, the owner, Adrian White, decided eight years ago to fence them off.

In August 1996, after a long local campaign, the then environment secretary, John Gummer, refused to designate the tracks as bridleways — prompting Robert Billson, a

chartered surveyor, to take the case to court.

Yesterday the judge ruled in the landowner's favour because the public had enjoyed access to the tracks only under the conditions of a special deed which Mr White was entitled to revoke.

Mr White's land forms about a quarter of the whole common, the rest being owned by the National Trust. The ruling does not affect the public's right to use paths and

bridleways on his land which are officially designated.

Alan Mattingly, director of the Ramblers' Association, said: "This case illustrates the need for legislation to protect public access to both common land and open countryside."

Fiona Sykes, deputy director of the British Horse Society's access and rights of way department, said: "Unfortunately, access to Rammore Common was by virtue of a revocable deed."

Gola revival shows some soccer boot brands are never hung up

John Duncan
Sports Correspondent

ROY of the Rovers swore by them, though obviously without swearing, and Manchester United endorsed them when the nearest they could get to a double was at the Trafford Arms after a match. Now, though, Gola boots are back.

The brand that was as 1970s as Spacehopping has languished throughout the last decade's sportswear boom, being sold from one conglomerate to the other, although at its peak it had a turnover of £15 million. But after 14 months' research by its new owners — D Jacobson and Sons, a Rawtenstall footwear company — it is to be relaunched in time for this summer's World Cup.

"In the 1970s almost everyone had some item of Gola kit, whether soccer shoes or a bag, and the brand still has huge recognition," said Harvey Jacobson, managing director of the Lancashire firm which hopes to have the biggest market share in sports shoes by 2003.

Gola was started in 1927, when the firm's products were made by independent factories around Northampton. But it ventured



Roy of the Rovers: Comic book hero and prolific Gola scorer

into the big time in the 1960s and 1970s when it had a string of high profile endorser, including the then Liverpool manager Bill Shankly and England's captain Gerry Francis.

The company will have little problem improving on Gola's past advertising success. One featuring Barry John, the Welsh rugby union player, ran:

"Rugby's a hard game, a man's game. Things can get rough on the park. But my Gola rugby gear will stand up to the toughest treatment. It's well worth a try."

Roy Race, Manchester Rovers' clean-cut fictional hero who kicked off in the Tiger in 1954, also signed up with Gola at a time when he listed "smoking, especially by women,"

among his selected dislikes. However, had the advertising must have worked. Market research by the Harris Research Centre says that Gola as a brand still has 73 per cent brand awareness, a remarkable achievement after almost 10 years' dormancy.

A new lightweight soccer rattle is set to kick the World Cup off to a rousing start, its maker claimed yesterday. Some 7 million of the collapsible rattles, weighing less than a Mars bar and decorated in different team colours, are predicted to create a deafening storm in France this summer.

The old wooden rattles were banned in the 1970s after hooligans started throwing them. But the new versions still make the same amount of noise — without doubling as potential weapons.

Richard Walsh, managing director of Promould in Banbury, Oxfordshire, is running his factory night and day with 20 staff to meet a £2 million order from the Millennium Advanced Group, which holds the world rights for rattles and other football accessories. He said: "They are expected to be a top seller. They are really noisy, outrageously so actually... [and] would just collapse if someone got hit by one."

News in brief

Child trapped by sunroof

A BOY aged three nearly killed himself by trapping his neck in an electric sunroof when left in a parked car.

He was saved because his father, believed to be a firefighter, returned to find his son unconscious and used his first-aid training to give the boy life and heart massage. The boy was put on a life support machine, but was able to leave hospital yesterday.

The car was left in Chester-le-Street, County Durham, on Friday while the father fetched flowers for Valentine's Day. The boy was in the back, but with the key in and stereo on. It is believed he climbed in front, hit the console's roof switch, stuck his head out, and then shut the roof on himself. Police said it was a "stark warning" to parents.

King Lear wins awards

THE ROYAL National Theatre's production of King Lear was the big prize-winner at yesterday's Olivier Awards in London. Ian Holm won best actor for his performance as

Lear, while Sir Richard Eyre was judged best director. Zoe Wanamaker won the award for best actress for her Elektra at the Donmar Warehouse, while Patrick Marber won the best new play category for Closer at the National.

Presenting a special award to Ed and David Mirvish, the father and son behind the Old Vic theatre, Culture Secretary Chris Smith said: "Please don't rush forward with a disposal of the Old Vic; instead give all the rest of us a chance to come forward with proposals."

French police pursue leads

FRENCH police were yesterday pursuing more than 40 leads following the release on Friday of a photo-fit picture of their main suspect in the rape and murder of a Cornish teenager, Caroline Dickinson.

A phone manhunt over the weekend had received more than 560 calls containing "some very promising and high quality testimony", said Jean-Pierre Michel of the St Malo police in Brittany.

Several men are likely to be asked to undergo DNA tests in an attempt to match their samples with those found on

the body of the 13-year-old girl, who was raped and suffocated while staying with a Launceston community college party in a Brittany youth hostel in July 1996. — Jon Henley in Paris

City unveils new hall plan

COUNCIL leaders yesterday unveiled revised plans for a 300-bedroom hotel in and on top of one of Manchester's most historic buildings, the Free Trade Hall, built in Flarentine palazzo style in 1856.

The original design was abandoned after Manchester's civic society denounced it as "just dreadful", however, the society yesterday described the new scheme as "absolutely appalling".

It features a 270ft high, 24-storey stone-faced drum rising from the roof of the hall, a Richard Leese, leader of Manchester city council, said it was a radical proposal that would enhance the architecture of the hall and of the city as a whole.

Mr Leese was furious when the society last year forced a public inquiry, saying that only the facade and one other wall remained of the original hall after wartime bombing. Yesterday he said he was still

angry with society members "who have no understanding of the city as a living entity and want to turn Manchester into a museum".

Anthony Blee, a historic buildings specialist brought in to rework the design, said the drum tower had been set back as far as possible from the listed facade.

Within the original palazzo element, there will be all the spacious elements you would expect in a five-star hotel," he said. — David Ward

Charter flight delays rise

AIRPORT delays are getting worse for holidaymakers. Some charter airlines operated more than a quarter of summer 1997 flights more than an hour late, reported the Air Transport Users Council, calling such delays "unacceptable".

Overall, 18 per cent of summer charters were more than an hour late either arriving or departing; the average delay was 38 minutes, compared with 35 minutes in 1996.

Best was Pegasus with 5 per cent more than one hour late and average delays of 14 minutes, while Monarch was one of the few to reduce delays compared with summer 1996.

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Sony next to
in Tesco ran
on 'overpriced'

Cost cuts

faces jail for knocking

holidaymaker
or bulk of bea

On the bee

popularity of oral sex

Sony next target in Tesco raids on 'overpricing'

Stuart Miller

THE battle between supermarkets and the makers of leading brand names escalated yesterday when Tesco announced it had targeted Sony in the latest round of its campaign against "selective distribution".

The supermarket giant has spent £5 million secretly buying up Sony electrical products which will go on sale at heavily discounted prices in 150 stores tomorrow.

Shoppers will, for example, be able to buy the market-leading PlayStation computer games console for £99.99 compared with the recommended price of £129.99 on the high street. A Sony Camcorder which sells for £469.99 elsewhere will retail for £399.99 in the supermarket. Micro hi-fi and compact disc players will also be on sale.

Tesco yesterday accused the manufacturer of restricting distribution of its products to maintain price levels. The chain had approached Sony about selling its products, but was told that it could not offer the necessary levels of service and expertise.

It then turned to the so-called "grey market", an increasingly popular route for retailers which circumvents normal supply channels.

John Gildersleeve, a Tesco director, said: "Selective distribution is bad for shoppers. When we asked Sony to sup-

Cost cuts

MARCH 1997: 45,000 pairs of Levi 501 jeans go on sale in 128 Tesco stores for up to £25 less than on the high street. Range expanded in two later raids.

AUGUST: Adidas sportswear, fashion clothing and trainers go on sale in more than 200 Tesco stores at discounts between 20 per cent and 50 per cent.

OCTOBER: £5 million of Calvin Klein underwear and jeans goes on sale, with men's boxer briefs selling for £10 compared with £15 elsewhere.

JANUARY 1998: Under the slogan "Just do it for less", Tesco buys up £5 million of Nike trainers and sportswear and sells them with discounts of up to 50 per cent.

ply direct they presented a range of unnecessary marketing criteria. Companies hide behind these criteria, they make bigger profits and customers lose out."

But Sony denied its marketing criteria masked inflated prices. "We operate a European dealership agreement which guarantees that consumers will receive the levels of expertise and support they expect," said a spokesman.

"This is not people going to buy a tin of beans. They are buying sophisticated equipment." Sony said its PlayStation came with more than 500 worth of accessories, unlike the Tesco stock.

The move was welcomed by consumer groups. Mark Purdy, of the Consumers' Association, said: "Anything that brings lower prices and greater choice has got to be a good thing."

Nigel Griffiths, the consumer affairs minister, has also backed the campaign against selective distribution. He believes foreign manufacturers are charging British consumers artificially high prices.

The supermarket chain's foray into electrical goods opens up a new front in its fight against brand name manufacturers, previously limited to clothing and footwear.

The move comes at a sensitive time for the electrical retail industry, ahead of an expected high street price war sparked by a Monopolies and Mergers Commission decision to outlaw the Recommended Retail Price.

The supermarkets insist the introduction of brand goods is not a gimmick. Despite the discount, companies still yield a healthy gross profit margin.

"It all shows the enormous margins the brand manufacturers expect to milk from the market place," Mr Gildersleeve said.

Fan faces jail for knocking out linesman

John Duncan
Sports Correspondent

A FOOTBALL fan who knocked a linesman unconscious during an FA Cup tie could face a prison sentence, magistrates said yesterday.

John Michael Corker, 34, a Sheffield United supporter living in Eastbourne, East Sussex, was said to have been upset when his team's goalkeeper was sent off against Portsmouth at Fratton Park.

Corker, who admitted drinking eight pints of lager before the game, ran down the touchline striking the linesman, Edward Martin, on the side of the face.

Corker admitted assault causing actual bodily harm to

Mr Martin, 28, and an offence of running on to the playing area. He was remanded on bail until March 16 for magistrates at Portsmouth for reports. The chairman Stanley Kiron said: "We believe the offence is so serious a custodial sentence could be justified."

Chris Randall, solicitor for Corker, told the court that he had never been involved in any incident of this kind before. "People I have spoken to have indicated he doesn't ordinarily get worked up by a football match," he had written a letter of apology to the linesman and both clubs.

The court heard that when Corker was interviewed by police, he could not recall the incident. "I don't remember much about it," he told them. "I was quite drunk."

Kelvin Wood, prosecuting, said Mr Martin was assaulted near the end of the first half. He had told the referee that a handball offence outside the area by the goalkeeper had denied Portsmouth a goal-scoring chance and as a result, the player was sent off.

In a statement, Mr Martin said he was watching the players surround the referee when he saw someone approaching from the right. He did not take too much notice because he thought it was a substitute.

"Someone hit me on the right hand side of my face and I was knocked unconscious," he said, adding that the next thing he remembered was waking up on a stretcher. His face was sore and he had damaged his right shoulder.

Holidaymakers blamed for bulk of beach litter

Janie Wilson

HOLIDAYMAKERS and day trippers are turning Britain's beaches into rubbish dumps of crisp packets, cigarette stubs and empty bottles, according to a survey published today.

Two thousand volunteers picked up more than 18.8 tonnes of rubbish from Britain's beaches over a single weekend last year — compared with 17.5 tonnes the year before.

Beachwatch 97, a joint project between Reader's Digest and the Marine Conservation Society, collected the 262,349 pieces of litter over 169 kilometres of coastline in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands — an average of 1,594 items per kilometre.

The survey found that for the fourth year running holidaymakers and day trippers were the worst offenders, responsible for 34.4 per cent of all the rubbish found, including 17,063 crisp and sweet packets, 6,064 drink cans and 8,124 cigarette stubs.

Julian Parr, Beachwatch officer for the society, said: "We are obviously alarmed that the amount of litter has increased. There is no excuse people need to be educated to take their rubbish home with them or put in the bins that are now fixtures on most beaches."

Shipping was the second worst offender, blamed for 14.3 per cent of the rubbish collected, including 1,163 oil and cleaner containers.

Fishing accounted for 11.6 per cent of the debris found.

On the beaches

Litter items per kilometre, collected September 20 and 21, 1997

North West	4,069
Wales	3,058
South West	1,529
North East	1,481
South East	1,166
Channel Islands	1,155
Scotland	1,135
Northern Ireland	636



closely followed by sewage waste floating in (3.5 per cent). Holidaymakers in Britain are not entirely to blame for the dirty beaches: the teams of litter collectors found a shampoo bottle from Croatia washed up on a beach in the North-west, a drinks container from Japan floated ashore in the South-west, a paper packet from the US had travelled across the Atlantic on to a Welsh beach and oven cleaner from China.

Plastic, the most persistent

debris material, has consistently made up more than half the litter recorded over the five years of Beachwatch. The latest figure of 57 per cent is the highest. "Increasingly, Beachwatch has shown us what a plastic-dominated society we've become," said Susannah Hickling, Reader's Digest environment editor. "But what people don't realise is that it ends up bobbing on our seas and washed up on our beaches — an appalling non-biodegradable legacy for future generations."

Rushdie wins government pledge to combat fatwa

David Pallister

IN THE faded gold-green splendour of the Ambassadors' Waiting Room, Salman Rushdie achieved something yesterday which he had been working towards for nine years. For the first time in the Foreign Office, he stood next to a foreign secretary who pledged to conduct a high-level campaign against the fatwa imposed by the late Ayatollah Khomeini.

The press conference with Robin Cook came after the author of *The Satanic Verses* was invited to dinner with Tony Blair at Chequers on Saturday — the ninth anniversary of the death sentence. Relaxed and dryly humorous, Mr Rushdie said: "I left home on the morning of Valentine's Day to do a television interview and never went home again. Since that time I have not possessed a front door key."

Mr Cook said the immediate priority would be to get a written assurance from the new Iranian government that it would not further the death threat. Efforts would be made to remove the \$2.5 million (£1.5 million) bounty offered last year by the Iranian Khorasani religious foundation.

With Britain holding the EU presidency, the issue is likely to be raised at the next meeting of the Council of Ministers. "I will work hard to do everything we can to lower and remove that threat," Mr Cook said before leaving.

Mr Rushdie, who stayed behind to answer questions,



Salman Rushdie... backing from minister Robin Cook

struck a slightly incongruous figure in his baggy grey wool cardigan.

He said he was delighted with the "support and solidarity" shown by the new Labour Government. Explaining that he was still advised to have police protection, he said: "I've tried as far as possible to live without fear. Fear paralyses you. I've tried to get on with my life."

He dismissed as nonsense the recent suggestion by

Ayatollah Hassan Samsi, the head of the Khorasani foundation, that the fatwa was irrevocable.

"There is always a crescendo of insults coming up to the anniversary," he said, "and this year the noises seem to be coming from the hardliners who lost the election. I am a political football in the internal politics of Iran."

As for British Muslims, he said he had met many who liked *The Satanic Verses*.

Babies good at grammar

Scientists have confirmed that every parent knows: babies are smart.

They can listen to a language and break it down into words and phrases, they can start putting meanings to those words and can compile rules of grammar almost before they can talk, and they can start learning 10 new words a day and keep it up for 30 years.

Richard Aslin, of the University of Rochester, told the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Philadelphia that he and colleagues were puzzled by the way babies learned to separate individual words from a sentence. Since every baby was exposed to its mother's tongue from birth, they tried a different trick. They made up a new nonsense language.

"The whole point is to create a series of words embedded in a continuous stream of speech. There are no pauses. There are no sentences. It is just simply a whole set of syllables concatenated together."

They blasted streams of this babble at baffled babies. They were not confused for long. "The answer is that eight-month-old infants, presented with this continuous stream of speech, are able to parse it, or segment it, into the words that we used to create this stream. The way they do that is that they pay attention to the relationships to the sounds that cohere within words, compared to the less predictable sequences of sound that span a boundary between words."

Peter Jusczyk, of Johns Hopkins University, said that even newborn infants could tell the difference between sounds like "pah" and "bah". "They can even do things like compensate for differences between different speakers' voices, or changes in speaking rate."

At six months, babies were happy to listen to either Dutch or English, which had similar intonation but different sounds. At nine months, American babies definitely preferred

English. They were also able to detect acoustic markers between clauses. "A clause is a unit that you need in order to figure out how the grammar works. We have been able to show that infants are actually sensitive to that kind of information from about 4.5 months of age. The infant can use information about the ordering of noun and verb phrases from 10 months, and at 16 months, knows where they belong in sentences."

But although the baby might already be getting the hang of the rules of language, it would not know much about meaning. Lila Gleitman of the University of Pennsylvania, put the learning rate between 1 year and 18 months at an average of one-third of a word a day: the problem was that it was initially quite difficult for the child to attach a word precisely to its meaning. "Daddy" for instance, was often at first applied to all men, rather than to just one. They soon got over that difficulty.

"Word learning is extremely efficient once a child reaches the age of about 15 to 18 months: about 10 words a day for all of the days of the years that go by, from 18 months to about 30 years old. That is about 70 words a week, 300 words a month, 3,500 words a year. It is an extremely efficient process."

Kenneth Wexler, a cognitive psychologist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said the standard assumption had for decades been that some features of language were innate, and arrived quickly: children had to learn everything else by rote, slowly and with difficulty. But it did not look like that to him. The particular parameters of a mother tongue — the rules that made English one thing, French another — were learned with astonishing speed.

"By listening to language, kids set these parameters correctly by the time they are 18 months. Probably, it is even earlier than that for many children."

Yesterdays, despite "great pain", she shrugged off both medical advice and ski chic to return to the pistes with her arm strapped inside her jacket. Adopting a one-armed style, she displayed her determination to continue with the holiday.

The accident happened on an icy patch when the duchess was skiing behind her seven-year-old daughter, Princess Eugenie, and a ski guide.

The injured shoulder was also said to be "very badly bruised".

"She was tail-ending, picked herself up and skied on down," her spokeswoman said. "The pain got worse during the day and the duchess went to hospital for an X-ray."

She added: "There's no great cause for alarm — the duchess is very tough and expects to stay in Verbier with her child for a month. Doctors said the injury would put the duchess out of action for more than a month. "This is a relatively minor injury to the shoulder. The duchess is one of many people at this time of year to fracture a bone while skiing," said Michael Pearce, head of orthopaedic trauma at Charing Cross hospital, London.

The duchess is planning to celebrate her ex-husband's 38th birthday in Verbier when the Duke of York flies out on Thursday. The couple are expected to pose for press photographs with Princess Eugenie and her nine-year-old sister, Princess Beatrice, who is recovering from the flu.

Look, one hand... The Duchess of York shrugs off the pain to ski with her right arm strapped. PHOTOGRAPH: FABRICE COFFRIN

As popularity of oral sex increases, scientists warn that it is not free of the risk of HIV

Sarah Bosley

ORAL sex is not safe sex, a review of medical studies published yesterday has found. It concludes that the HIV virus can be passed from penis or vagina to mouth.

Oral sex has become increasingly common among both heterosexual and homosexual couples, according to

the report in the journal *Sexually Transmitted Infections*. It says 72.9 per cent of men and 66.2 per cent of women had experienced cunnilingus, while 69.4 per cent of men and 64 per cent of women had experienced fellatio.

"Contemporary culture is approving of oro-genital sex, and during the 1970s and 1980s premarital oral sex has increased dramatically," say authors Sarah Edwards and Chris Carne from the department of genito-urinary medicine department at Addenbrooke's hospital, Cambridge.

"In one study more adolescent girls had received oral genital stimulation than had vaginal intercourse."

Oral sex has now become a significant route for sexually transmitted diseases. Among those that scientists now think could be passed in this way are genital warts, herpes and hepatitis C. Oral anal sex carries a risk of transmission of hepatitis A and B.

HIV, like the other viruses, is more likely to be passed on through vaginal and anal sex, but case reports suggest the possibility that it can also be transmitted through oral sex.

In the early years of the American Aids epidemic, it was suggested that there was negligible risk of HIV infection through oral sex, "however it may be that the risk was obscured by the frequent practice of higher risk activities."

Behaviour has changed since that time and says the report. Now there is an increasing number of case reports of transmission following oral sex between men.

Cases of HIV transmission between women have been reported, although not all may be genuine, the study says, "as there appears to be underreporting of bisexual activity". Another study showed infected heterosexual partners of those who were HIV positive were more likely to have practised oral sex.

Following oral sex between men. Cases of HIV transmission between women have been reported, although not all may be genuine, the study says, "as there appears to be underreporting of bisexual activity". Another study showed infected heterosexual partners of those who were HIV positive were more likely to have practised oral sex.

PM clear of Mossad mess

Israel's inquiry into the plot to kill a Hamas leader in Jordan may spark a new row, writes **David Sharrock**

THE Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, was cleared yesterday of responsibility for the most disastrous operations when an inquiry concluded that a plan to assassinate an Islamic militant leader in neighbouring Jordan was "seriously flawed".

The government-appointed panel sharply criticised the head of Mossad, Danny Yatom, saying that he did not take

into account the possible failure of the mission, undertaken last September. Mr Yatom will not be asked to resign but will quietly leave his post in a few months, thereby avoiding public humiliation, according to Hebrew newspapers.

But relations with Jordan, Israel's friendliest Arab nation, have plunged to a new low, with King Hussein said to be furious that the report failed to castigate Mossad for carrying out the operation in his capital, Amman, and did

not rule out future attacks there.

In the assassination attempt, two Mossad agents waited for Khaled Meshal, head of the "diplomatic section" of Hamas, outside his office and injected poison into his ear.

The report said: "It was generally believed that the weapon in question and its mode of use were almost infallible."

Mr Meshal was taken to a hospital with breathing difficulties but recovered. His bodyguards chased and caught the two Israelis.

Two members of the panel, Rafi Peled and Joseph Cichanover, are senior civil servants.

Their report stated: "We reached the conclusion that the prime minister had dealt with the case in a responsible manner, having considered and examined the plans presented to him from every possible aspect that might have been expected of him."

"We do not therefore find any flaw in the conduct of the prime minister as minister in charge of the Mossad."

Mr Netanyahu approved the Mossad operation in the wake of Hamas suicide bombings last year in Jerusalem which killed 21 Israelis.

The attack in Jordan was based on the principle that no place in the world should be allowed to serve as a safe harbour for those who plan to carry out murders and acts of terror in Israel, the report said.

The bungled assassination attempt forced Mr Netanyahu to free Hamas's founder, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and up to 70 other prisoners to secure the release of the two Mossad agents from Jordan.

It is believed that Jordan told senior Israeli defence and intelligence officials that it wanted the report to make a public commitment to refrain from such operations in Jordan. In Amman, angry officials said: "This is a committee ap-

pointed by Netanyahu to extricate Netanyahu and handle the 'technical details'."

Opposition leaders were no happier. "I find it hard to believe this committee investigated the affair at all," said a Knesset member, Yossi Sarid.

"It shows once again that people dependent on the prime minister for their jobs cannot scrutinise his conduct."

News in brief

Kurdish politicians detained in Turkey

LEADERS of Turkey's main Kurdish party were being held yesterday after a state prosecutor charged them with being linked to separatist guerrillas.

An Ankara court ruled earlier that the seven People's Democracy Party (HDP) leaders should be held in custody until they are tried on charges of membership of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

A lawyer for HDP, Yusuf Alatas, dismissed the charges as a ploy intended to lay the ground for banning the party.

Leading party members were detained by police in the capital last week as part of an investigation into a party calendar alleged to promote separatism. Detention orders are out for 50 other party officials. Party activists say they believe the calendar was picked up for featuring pictures of Leyla Zana, a Kurdish MP serving a 15-year prison sentence for having guerrilla ties. — *Reuters, Ankara*

Quebec secession case opens

IN WHAT Canada's chief justice calls the country's most important legal case ever, the supreme court yesterday opened hearings on whether Quebec has the right to secede unilaterally and declare independence.

Separatists say the secession question should be settled by voters, not judges. The court is expected to issue its ruling within six months. If it rules that Quebec cannot secede without the rest of Canada's consent, there could be a backlash in the mostly French-speaking province.

The case was initiated by the government. The prime minister, Jean Chrétien, is a Quebecer opposed to secession. — *AP, Ottawa*

New smog worry on Borneo

BUSH fires are spreading on the Indonesian part of Borneo. The forestry minister, Djahiduddin Suryohadikusumo, was quoted by the official Antara news agency yesterday as saying there were 855 fires recorded in east Kalimantan province on Sunday night, compared with 618 on Saturday.

He said the government had sent in aircraft to try to put out the fires on the island, which Indonesia shares with Malaysia and Brunei.

The outbreaks threaten the return of smog which blanketed a large swath of South-East Asia last year, causing widespread health and environmental problems. — *Reuters, Jakarta*

'Prove Islamism or die'

A GERMAN businessman condemned to death for sex with an Iranian woman can have the verdict overturned by proving he converted to Islam before starting the relationship, Iran's top judge said yesterday.

But Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi suggested that Helmut Hofer claimed to be a Muslim simply to escape punishment. "This conversion was before he started the relationship and then he does not face punishment under Islamic law. Otherwise, he faces serious punishment," the ayatollah said.

Mr Hofer, aged 54, was sentenced to death last month for having sex with a 26-year-old medical student he met during a business trip in September. He appealed against the verdict, claiming he had converted to Islam several years ago. — *AP, Tehran*

Eight killed in rifle rampage

A MAN armed with a hunting rifle killed eight people in his four-house Lithuanian hamlet before being shot dead by one of his surviving neighbours.

The weekend violence in Dranciui, about 30 miles north of Vilnius, started when Leonardas Zavislovicius, aged 58, began shooting at windows, officials said.

Then he entered houses and began killing the residents. Five women and three men were killed, police said. The motive for the rampage was not known. Police said Zavislovicius had no criminal record, was not known to have a drink problem and had not exhibited unusual behaviour. — *AP, Vilnius*

Alert after Chinese bus blast

POLICE were on high alert in the Chinese industrial city of Wuhan after a weekend explosion, apparently caused by a bomb, ripped apart a bus and killed 16 people, a state newspaper said yesterday.

Police and officials remained tight-lipped about the cause of the blast on the approaches to a bridge spanning the Yangtze river.

A Hong Kong-based human rights group has speculated that disgruntled workers or Muslim separatists were to blame. — *Reuters, Beijing*

Algeria denies nuclear claim

THE Algerian foreign ministry yesterday denied a report in an American magazine that Iraq had transferred nuclear material to Algeria.

A spokesman, Abdelaziz Sbaa, told a press conference in Algiers that the allegations made in US News and World Report magazine were "fantasy". — *Reuters, Paris*

Bloodbath fear in Sierra Leone

A MAN accused of supporting Sierra Leone's deposed junta is escorted by a peacekeeping soldier and policeman in Freetown yesterday.

The Nigerian-led Ecomog force has taken control of the country's biggest diamond town, Koidu, called on the West African peacekeepers to prevent a bloodbath as troops loyal to the junta fought with residents.

A Lebanese refugee who fled to neighbouring Guinea said by radio that junta forces were looting and fighting what they called "local vigilante groups". Another said he had been told of bodies lying in the streets, and that he feared the situation was out of control. — *Reuters, Freetown*

Russian 'godfather' shot dead

A MAN suspected by police of being the godfather of the Russian mafia operating in southern Spain has been killed by unidentified gunmen, the Spanish daily El Mundo reported yesterday.

The man was shot twice in the head on Sunday morning as he slept in his villa in the luxury beach resort of Marbella, it said. Sources said the murder appeared to be a "cold-blooded settling of accounts". — *Reuters, Madrid*

Fatal pile-ups in Italian fog

ABOUT 150 cars piled up in fog on a main road south of Rome yesterday, killing at least four people and injuring dozens.

Thick fog covered long stretches of the A1, which runs from Rome to Naples, and caused several crashes over a two-mile stretch in one hour, Ansa news agency said. At least 90 of the injured were reported to be in serious condition. — *AP, Rome*

Bedouin moved out for settlers

ISRAELI police yesterday evicted dozens of Bedouin families from their West Bank encampment at Maaleh Adumim to make way for the expansion of a Jewish settlement, witnesses said.

Suleiman Mazarah, a leader of the Jahalin tribe, said police used bulldozers to clear the area of 85 families.

An Israeli official said more Bedouin would be moved out because they were squatting on state-owned land.

Witnesses said some Bedouin shouted at police as they were being moved. "They didn't tell us anything. They want to move all of us. This is very wrong. We have lived in this area since the 1960s. We urge human rights groups and the international community to find us a solution," Mr Mazarah said.

Peter Learner, spokesman for Israel's military authority in the West Bank, said the Bedouin were moved after the high court rejected their appeal against eviction. "The Bedouin have settled and built on state-owned land. They received orders to leave but because they didn't leave accordingly, we have to do it ourselves." — *Reuters*



A tattooed Bedouin woman protests as Israel bulldozes their camp to expand the West Bank settlement of Maaleh Adumim. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILVERMAN

Hollywood stalks paparazzi with tough new law

Christopher Hood in Los Angeles

AS TWO British photographers face a possible two-year jail sentence next week for ambushing the actor Arnold Schwarzenegger and his wife, a powerful anti-paparazzi bill is being introduced in Washington.

Giles Harrison, aged 23, and Andy O'Brien, aged 31, who were found guilty of "false imprisonment".

They used their vehicles to hem in the Austrian-born actor, who was recuperating from heart surgery, and his wife, the television correspondent Maria Shriver, who was pregnant, as they drove

His death in a skiing accident last month makes the legislation his memorial.

Hollywood is also keen to point out that such legal protection would not be confined to the rich and famous.

Richard Masur, president of the Screen Actors Guild, which helped to draft the bill, said: "It is for anyone whose privacy might be invaded... this is more and more possible all the time. We think this legislation will deal with 85 to 90 per cent of the most egregious behaviour."

Legal experts say the bill has been cunningly drafted to get round the objections which are expected to come, particularly from civil liberties groups — on the grounds that it infringes such constitutional rights as freedom of speech, enshrined in the first amendment.

The bill, which uses words such as "endangerment" and "trespassing", does not interfere with photographers' right to take shots of the famous in a public place but curbs anything amounting to harassment or pursuit.

Erwin Chemerinsky, law professor at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and one of the bill's three legal advisers, admits that many states already have laws of trespass and assault which forbid pushing and shoving, chasing people on foot or in cars, blocking their path or invading their property, but he says that the bill will be "an important symbol that the federal government is acting to protect a group that is threatened."

The idea of legislating for privacy was born when the actors Sharon Stone and Richard Dreyfuss met Ms Feinstein and Senator Barbara Boxer at the Screen Actors Guild last summer to complain about the paparazzi.

It gained momentum after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, last August.

The late Sonny Bono was to have introduced it in the House. It will now be his memorial

their son to kindergarten in Santa Monica last year.

Clearly angry, the judge said the photographer had behaved "outrageously".

The senior Democrat senator for California, Dianne Feinstein, has prepared the Personal Privacy Protection Bill with the help of three law professors, said to be the country's best constitutional legal minds, and the enthusiastic support of Hollywood stars.

It has also been endorsed by the Utah Republican Orrin Hatch, head of the Senate judiciary committee.

The generous donors many stars give to political campaigns ensure that Hollywood has substantial influence, but the bill is also backed by the force of sentiment.

Congressman Sonny Bono, formerly of the Sonny and Cher singing duo, was to have introduced it in the House.

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Iraq crisis



US marines in Kuwait carry out training exercises yesterday as, right, police move a protester out of the way during a sit-in by about 100 peace campaigners at the Northwood air base, Middlesex



PHOTOGRAPHS: RAED QUETANA AND ANDREW TESTA

Unity breaks out in Security Council

Diplomacy

Ian Black in London and Julian Borger in Amman

THE prospects for international unity on the Iraqi crisis improved last night as the United States, Britain, Russia, France and China finalised proposals that the United Nations secretary-general, Kofi Annan, is expected to take to Baghdad later this week.

As ambassadors from the five permanent members of the Security Council met in New York, diplomats predicted agreement on how to meet Iraq's concern about sensitive sites while preserving the integrity of arms in-

spections by the UN Special Commission, Unscocm.

Fuelling optimism that air strikes can be averted, the French president, Jacques Chirac, said a diplomatic solution was technically within reach.

Britain, France and Russia say disputed palaces could be examined by an "ad hoc group" drawn from Unscocm, although there are disagreements over whether Mr Annan should supervise them.

Other ideas involve a role for diplomats and non-Unscocm technical experts — dubbed "Unscocm plus suits" or "Unscocm plus bowler hats".

Baghdad claims that Unscocm, headed by the Australian diplomat Richard Butler, is an "adversary" that cannot make independent judgments about Iraq's chemical and bio-

logical weapons. But the commission's records show a pattern of evasion and deception by the Iraqi authorities.

UN sources said the key question was whether Washington — on holiday yesterday — would accept a new formula giving Unscocm a "core role" but not an exclusive one in inspections.

The US has said it will not accept any "hollow" proposal that undercuts the right of inspectors to "unrestricted and unfettered" access.

Unscocm's job is to certify that Iraq has destroyed its weapons of mass destruction before the Security Council will lift economic sanctions imposed after the invasion of Kuwait.

"We can probably agree on what mandate Annan should have but we still don't know what the Iraqi response will

Australia and New Zealand send commandos to join allied forces

MORE than 100 Australian SAS commandos leave Perth today to join American and British forces confronting Saddam Hussein in the Gulf, writes David Fairhall, Defence Correspondent.

They will be accompanied by a pair of Boeing 707 aerial refuelling tankers, plus medical and intelligence specialists. The SAS men could be used to rescue allied pilots shot down over the Iraqi desert.

The Australian prime minister, John Howard, said they would be in Kuwait for three months. But he said the forces had not yet been cleared to go into action. "I continue to hope that the diplomatic attempts under way at a number of levels will bear

fruit", he said. "Nobody wants force used."

The New Zealand cabinet yesterday approved the despatch of 20 SAS commandos and two Orion search and rescue aircraft.

Canada last week agreed to send a frigate and two Hercules transports in what the defence minister, Art Eggleton, admitted was a "low-risk" operation.

nothing like its contribution in 1991.

The Canadian military denied this was merely a gesture, but Brigadier-General David Jurkowski predicted that President Saddam would endure American and British bombing until international outrage at civilian deaths put a stop to it, and then declare victory.

During an earlier crisis over UN weapons inspections last November, the palaces were crammed with Iraqi civilians, who were encouraged to camp on the marble floors as a patriotic gesture to dissuade US and British forces from targeting them.

underline what has been a feature of his behaviour, which is that as deadlines approach and pressure increases, he has shown a tendency to back down."

In Iraq, meanwhile, the state newspaper Al-Jumhuriya called for "volunteer

human shields" to protect President Saddam's palaces against the threat of air strikes.

A front-page editorial declared: "Volunteering to defend people's palaces is a sublime moral action against US barbarism."

This was the first overt Iraqi threat to use human shields since the crisis began. In recent weeks Baghdad has been assembling "people's militias" but had not specified their role.

London comment, page 8

Getting ready for the 'real thing'

US fleet

Nicholas Goldberg in the Gulf

AHUNDRED miles from Iraq, Commander Andrew Brugal — known as "Bluto" to his colleagues — is preparing for war.

From the aircraft carrier Independence in the Gulf, he leads the Black Knights squadron — 300 F-14 fighter jets and 300 men — in reconnaissance flights and practice bombing runs, and teaches his pilots, who are usually stationed in Japan, the enemy's terrain.

Striding through the hangar and across the landing deck, where men are loading Phoenix missiles and precision-guided bombs on planes, he says: "They don't know it yet, but the real thing is totally different. You see better, you smell things, you sense things. Everything is peaked."

Cmdr Brugal, aged 40, flew 38 missions in Operation Desert Storm.

Six levels below the landing deck, Tony Freire, a petty officer 1st class, is keeping the ship's giant boilers and electricity generators running smoothly. When planes are catapulted from the deck, it is Petty Officer Freire's steam that does the work. He has sometimes gone weeks without seeing daylight.

PO Freire and Cmdr Brugal do not know each other, but both are vital to the plans for military action against Iraq.

The Independence, with about 5,000 men, is joined

by another United States carrier, the George Washington, in the Gulf.

Cmdr Brugal's F-14s — the Grumman-made Tomcats — are among 320 aircraft stationed in the region. An armada of smaller warships — destroyers, submarines and cruisers — is patrolling as well. In all, there are nearly 30,000 troops in place for the strike, if it comes.

As US officials continued to prepare for "the military option" in the standoff with the Iraqi president, Saddam Hussein, the defence secretary, William Cohen, dispatched another 40 planes to the region, including six F-117 stealth fighters to Kuwait and six B-52s to the Indian Ocean.

But to maintain that level of preparedness is costly. The Independence provides 15,000 meals a day and washes 100 tons of laundry a month. It includes a full operating room staffed with surgeons, a television station, thousands of computers, 2,300 phones, and e-mail services for the crew.

Some of the crew interviewed acknowledged that they were anxious or excited, but most were just planning to follow orders. Military euphemisms, such as "collateral damage" for civilian deaths, dulled most conversations.

But most agreed that it was time for the situation in Iraq to be resolved once and for all. "This has been dragging out since 1987," said PO Freire, who has since been sent to the Gulf four times. "Whether it's diplomatic or military, I think it's time for some closure." — *Newsday*.

An air war 'less costly this time'

Tactics

David Fairhall, Defence Correspondent

AERICAN-LED forces in the Gulf expect to lose relatively fewer aircraft than in 1991 if a bombing campaign is launched against Saddam Hussein.

Iraq has rebuilt its shattered air defences have been substantially rebuilt in the past seven years, but not to the same standard. And since it has fewer opportunities to test its longer range missile batteries — SA-2s, SA-3s and mobile SA-6s — British military intelligence sources believe that Iraq's system "is neither as comprehensive nor as good as it was in 1991".

Allied commanders have a much better picture now of the system they are up against. They have made thousands of surveillance passes with satellites, high-altitude US spy planes and RAF photo-reconnaissance Tornados. It should be easier to direct anti-radiation missiles at ground radars and cut the communications between them. British defence sources yesterday declared their own forces "ready to go".

This time RAF pilots will not be expected to concentrate on low-level airfield attacks, flying through a hail of Iraqi ground fire. Several Tornados were lost in 1991 before this tactic was abandoned for medium-level precision bombing. All told, the RAF lost six aircraft in that war.

The configuration of the United States forces in the Gulf — a preponderance of ship-launched cruise missiles, heavy bombers with air-launched cruise missiles, and stealth fighters almost invisible to enemy radar — suggests that the Pentagon is more determined than usual to minimise politically embarrassing casualties. There are no F-15E bombers in the region, although their presence might be expected, since they carry specialised bunker-busting bombs.

President Saddam's crippled air force still has about 300 combat aircraft, including some potentially

effective French Mirage fighters and Soviet-built MIG-29s. The French-trained Iraqi pilots, at least, are believed to be competent. But they have had little flying practice, and morale is thought to be extremely low.

President Saddam may judge it better to preserve the remains of his air force as a counterweight to his neighbours in some future conflict, than risk it against the US. He is in no position to replace losses.

Washington and London are more concerned at the possibility, albeit remote, that he may mount a desperate act of retaliation with what remains of the ballistic missiles he raised on Tel Aviv and Riyadh seven years ago, this time perhaps fitted with chemical or biological warheads.

British intelligence sources

Saddam may want to preserve the remains of his air force, not risk it against the US

do not expect such attacks. But they estimate that about 10 al-Husseini missiles — developments of the Soviet-built Scuds with a range of 400 miles — have probably been hidden from the United Nations inspectors. This is fewer than the 30 to 40 missiles suggested by the Pentagon.

If they have been stored as complete missiles, rather than as dismantled components, they would be operational in take just a few days.

The Iraqis have also been developing their own Scud-like missile, test-fired late last year. It would be a target for the allies, but it is a legitimate weapon under UN Security Council resolutions if, as Iraq has declared, its range is less than 94 miles. This would enable it to reach Kuwait City but not Tel Aviv or Riyadh. Iraq is not allowed Scuds and al-Husseini because they have a longer range.

Analysis, page 11

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War is not an easy option

Peace is more difficult, but more rewarding

IS IT diplomacy or camouflage? Is there really a negotiable solution to the Iraq crisis, as the UN Secretary-General still hopes? Or do the latest moves, energetically promoted by Britain, merely amount to (perhaps unwitting) diplomatic cover while the war machine grinds into place?

Last night President Chirac spoke of a diplomatic solution being "technically" within reach. But top Clinton administration officials continue to say that they see "no answer" to the impasse. Defence Secretary William Cohen has dismissed the latest proposal for inspection of the presidential palaces as "dust... raised by Saddam Hussein". Uncompromising language of this sort begins to make Britain sound like Mr Soft in a double act. A certain amount of bluff is to be expected, but not if it is directed against our own public. Today's parliamentary debate needs to be reassured that Mr Amman's plea last week to show flexibility has been listened to, and that he is going equipped by the Security Council to go to Baghdad with a workable plan.

A British parliament — and a government which is current EU president — would do well to view the latest crisis from a broader historical perspective than that likely to be adopted by a US congress and administration. When the Gulf war was concluded six years ago, there was a chorus of agreement that it was part of the much wider Middle East problem — and that the war had created an unrepeatable chance for solving it. That chance has been dismally missed. Among the many arguments against a military strike upon Iraq today is the impression which it will reinforce in the Arab world that the US, and now its British ally, finds it easier to make war than peace. Parliament also needs to consider how far Britain's close adherence to the US line may weaken its own independent voice.

The point is underlined by the report published yesterday from Jerusalem on Israel's botched assassination attempt last September in Amman. The commission of inquiry acquits Benjamin Netanyahu of any blame for a "tactical" operation which went wrong. It merely criticises the way the operation was mounted. Mossad was wrong to assume, it complains, that the chemical poison used by its killers was "infallible". For millions of Arabs around the Middle East, the fact that an Israeli prime minister has authorised the strategy of assassination by these means in an Arab capital rings far louder than Western warnings about Saddam's future chemical warfare intentions.

Experts here as well as in the Middle East are asking whether war upon Iraq will reduce or increase the chances of Saddam using such weapons — and of Israel retaliating. The highly respectable Israeli military analyst Zeev Schiff has raised doubts about Mr Netanyahu's ability to handle Israel's weapons responsibly. Whatever the results of this crisis, four Middle Eastern powers — Iran and Syria as well as Iraq and Israel — have the capability for weapons of mass destruction. Simply to demonise Saddam — "evil dictator" though he is — misses the wider dimension of arms control in this most unstable region of the post-cold war world.

Beyond the argument about Uncom and arms inspection, and the uncertainties about the outcome of any action, lies a broader strategic argument — that the credibility of the US as sole surviving superpower is at stake. Yet an action with uncertain military consequences which splits the Security Council, undermines the UN's authority, and divides the region, is not going to strengthen that claim. The danger is that war can come to seem the easier option; peace should remain the more rewarding, though more difficult aim.

The Tories' cultural revolution

Rewriting the rules is a good start; changing minds takes longer

IT SAYS a lot about the Conservatives that the headlines following yesterday's launch of a set of party reforms billed as the most significant since Disraeli dwelled not on the ideas themselves, but on the colour of the set new mauve, replacing old Tory blue. When Labour made its historic shifts — ditching Clause 4 or moving toward one member, one vote — journalists hailed a historic change, poring over every word of the small print. William Hague is accorded no such respect. Nine months after the May 1 wipeout, the Tories are still regarded as a political sideshow, their deliberations seen as those of a minor party, years away from any chance of power.

And yet the Fresh Future reforms unveiled yesterday are worthy of note. Most are not only sensible in their own right, they sketch the outlines of the kind of party Mr Hague wants to lead. Ending the division between Central Office, the parliamentary party and the voluntary associations is long overdue; now, for the first time, a single entity known as the Conservative Party will actually exist. Similarly, the allocation of one vote to every member in party elections represents a genuine breakthrough. When Labour first allowed people other than MPs to have a say in leadership contests, the Tories condemned the move as a step toward militant extra-parliamentary action. Now they are out-Labouring Labour, going for an outright OMOV system. Meanwhile Tony Blair's successor will

still be chosen by an electoral college in which the unions have an automatic 40 per cent share. Until Labour changes its own rules, Mr Hague will be able to claim this narrow slice of high ground.

The Tory leader has not been scared to chuck out items of party heritage: yesterday's blueprint includes the wind-up of the Young Conservatives and an attack on sieze. He has set up an ethics and integrity committee, designed to reinforce his ban on foreign donations and his new rules on disclosure of party benefactors — but mainly to show the party has learned its lesson from the scandals of the Major era.

That last announcement was tainted somewhat by the revelation that Michael Ashcroft, a multi-millionaire tax exile, is to have a major role in the Tories' fund-raising effort. That blot is typical of the problems Mr Hague is likely to encounter as he presses ahead with his reforms. For, however noble his intentions, the culture of the Conservative Party will not be easy to change. He wants to recruit more women and members of the ethnic minorities, but will not go down the "patronising" route of affirmative action. How then does he hope to achieve greater diversity? He wants a younger party, with strength in Scotland, Wales and the North of England. But how will he do it? Rewriting the rule book is a good start, but Mr Hague has to eradicate the prejudices and open the minds of his party — and that will take a lot longer.

Predatory propaganda

Or woolly thinking about a sophisticated argument

A CONFUSION appears to have arisen in the minds of people who should know better over the meaning of the words "predatory pricing". Let us take an example: the editors of a daily and a Sunday broadsheet paper — let us call them Andrew and Rosie — write a letter to readers of rival newspapers trying to tempt them away. In order to make the offer more alluring they dangle a carrot: readers can have the papers free for two weeks, and at a special reduced price for a trial period thereafter. Q: Is this predatory pricing? A: Of course not. It is a simple piece of directed marketing. The papers — let us call them the Independent and the Independent on Sunday — continue to be sold at full price. It is perfectly legitimate to try a targeted mailshot with a special offer lasting a month in order to win new customers. Clever Andrew and Rosie.

But wait. A year later the Guardian

and Observer offer almost exactly the same deal to a number of independent readers. Nothing, surely, could be more straightforward. But suddenly the air is full of squawks and squeals. Squawking loudest is Rosie, with background yelps from Andrew Neil, the ubiquitous editor-in-chief. The Guardian is apparently "siding with Rupert Murdoch". It is — wait for it — "the real predator". This is tush of such a high order that it is little wonder that there should be audible groans from supporters of an amendment to prevent genuine predatory pricing. There is a world of difference between a mailshot offering a four-week trial for newspapers which sell at full price — whether from this paper or Rosie's paper — and four and a half years of selling a paper at half the price of its rivals and well below the price it costs to produce. A failure to appreciate that is either wilful or mischievous.



Letters to the Editor

Curiouser and curiouser

ON October 21, 1998, 109 children were killed in their classrooms by the side of the Aberdeen road. On October 27, civil servants advised the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, to reject requests for a memorial service in Westminster Abbey for the victims "partly because the Welsh Church was disestablished and had no claim on Westminster Abbey" (source: Public Record Office, Prem 13/1280). This makes a curious contrast with the laying-in of the body of Enoch Powell. I am bemused that a Welsh Church spokesman is reportedly "bemused". Prof Iain MacLean, Nuffield College, Oxford.

SATURDAY'S Guardian made interesting reading. A man gets drunk, crushes a child to death and gets two and a half years because obviously, it was a dreadful mistake (Babysitter suffocated child). A 4ft 10in woman gets drunk, thinks she's Wyatt Earp and raids a pizza restaurant for £20 (Pistol packing cowboy raided pizza place). Society apparently needs to be protected from people like her, so she gets four years (and presumably her child gets sent into "care"). Who would you rather leave your child with? Alistair Sasaki McCapra, London.

STRANGE though it sounds, February 13, 1998, is not the 250th anniversary of February 13, 1748. In 1752, 11 days were omitted from the calendar to correct anomalies (Gregorian, GMT and the like). A few centuries. Ghost hunters off Deal (Letters, February 13) should therefore be looking for their ghost ship on February 24. Rex Southey, Durham.

IF I understand the BBBC correctly, women cannot box because they might damage their breasts, whereas men can box because they only damage their heads (Breasts, PMT and the pill box). Society apparently needs to be protected from people like her, so she gets four years (and presumably her child gets sent into "care"). Who would you rather leave your child with? Alistair Sasaki McCapra, London.

IT IS the EU member states that have obliged the European Parliament to divide its business between the cities of Brussels and Strasbourg (BREPs, new places cost a billion, February 13). This decision was taken by the Heads of Government in 1992, not by the European parliament. The building will be used for meetings of parliamentary committees and political groups. Additional sessions of Parliament will take up 14 days and not six as mentioned in your article. Martyna Bond, European Parliament Office, London.

Ruud awakening

CHELSEA have informed me that my season ticket for next year will cost me £235, an increase of £170 or 47 per cent. If Chelsea fail to play any cup games at home, this increases to £277 per match. They laughably add, "... it is in both our interests for you to renew by 15th April and take advantage of the discount". If I decide to renew after this date, I pay £245. Expensive? Wait for it. If I wanted to sit in the East Stand middle tier, I would be asked to pay £1,025. Surely this increase would have been enough to keep the most successful manager we have had for 27 years? But he was just being greedy wasn't he? Ron Coelho, London.

Transnationals rule, OK

THE Minister for Trade and Industry, Lord Clinton-Davis, ignores the opposition to the Multinational Agreement on Investment which has grown at an immense rate since the draft of this secretive treaty was made public (Letters, February 14). There is a real danger of the MAI leading to a reduction in environmental and labour standards for the sake of more foreign investment. The effects on the poorest countries are likely to be devastating. Lord Clinton-Davis says the dispute settlement mechanism is not new, but he fails to add that similar provisions under the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) have allowed US multinational Ethyl Corporation to claim \$251 million (£150 million) from the Canadian government, after it decided to ban the toxic chemical MMT, made by Ethyl.

Lord Clinton-Davis also correctly states that countries can lodge exemptions. Accordingly, the US will exempt all its state and local governments, as well as many businesses. However, the UK has made no similar request. Foreign direct investment can be a good thing, but in its draft form, the MAI provides investors with sweeping new rights, but no enforceable responsibilities. Barry Coates, World Development Movement. Tony Juniper, Friends of the Earth. Robin Fellow, WWF-UK.

NONE of the supposed safeguards mentioned in Lord Clinton-Davis's letter exist in the proposed treaty and it is indicative of its intent that recalcitrant Third World countries are being threatened with the curtailment of foreign aid if they don't sign away their national rights. Look at what Gatt and the WTO has already done. US multinational fruit conglomerates have used them to destroy the favoured nation status of the small Caribbean banana-growers, enriching themselves at the expense of family-run banana farms who are now turning to cannabis as their only hope of a decent return. Paul Edwards, Exeter Green Party.

IF the MAI had been in force 10 years ago, it is likely that Nelson Mandela would still be in jail, as the international boycott which broke the apartheid regime would have been illegal. Transnational corporations are already more powerful than many nation states. To describe them as victims of discrimination needing more protection is another example of the Orwellian Newspeak of global corporate rule. A democracy which advocates the right to favour its citizens over foreign corporations will soon lose its public legitimacy, with potentially disastrous consequences. Jakob von Uexküll, London.

Iraq: tension mounts

WE DEPLORE the proposed military action by Britain against Iraq, which seems to be approaching with obscene inevitability (UN chief to meet Saddam as more bombers go to Gulf, February 16). Any attack will bring misery and death to the Iraqi people, who are already denied many necessities, including food and medicines, as a result of British-backed sanctions.

The West should avoid fomenting conflict in a region which is already unstable. Attacking Iraq will lend support to Saddam Hussein's domestic propaganda and increase strains on Arab relations with the West. Britain has no right to dictate which regimes are acceptable when there is no apparent popular demand for intervention from within the country being attacked. This attack seems all the more like war-mongering because its motives are suspect. The arbitrariness of the choice of Iraq as a target is underlined by the relatively recent action of Britain in selling arms to Iraq, and by the existence of numerous other regimes in the world which clearly violate the human rights of their own or neighbouring countries' citizens. Rachel Foxley, Jeff Vernon, (and 32 others), Trinity College, Cambridge.

YOU quote the Defence Secretary, George Robertson, as saying that the chemical weapon Agent 15 may have caused the so-called Gulf War Syndrome (Agent 15 offers due to Gulf war syndrome, February 10). This stemmed from Mr Robertson's announcement, during Defence Questions on February 9 that he was making available new information on Iraq's chemical weapons capability at the time of the Gulf war. It is, however, simply not true that Mr Robertson suggested that there might be a link between Agent 15 and any of the illnesses suffered by those serving in the Gulf war. Far from it. He stressed, once again, that we have no confirmed evidence of the use of any chemical weapons by Iraq. He said that, notwithstanding the absence of any such evidence, because of his concern about Gulf war veterans, the Ministry of Defence would be looking to investigate Agent 15 further. Oona Mulrhead, Director of Information Strategy, Ministry of Defence.



Nothing to lose but your ciabatta

THE Bread and Roses pub doesn't actually sell ciabatta (Drinking class finds ciabatta bread a bit hard to swallow, February 13), but then why let simple facts spoil a good put-down? The real story is that the award-winning design of the Bread and Roses reflects the modern and contemporary relevance of the labour movement. Kennedy may still wish

to peddle the myths of flat caps versus wing collars, but relax, you still have a couple of years left to join the 20th century. Anthony Barbrage, The Workers Beer Company, London.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please give a full postal address.

Figurative art

YOU report that the exhibition Sensation has financially rescued the Royal Academy of Arts (Shooting Stars, The Week, February 14). The Academy has just announced a £175,000 surplus on its operating account, the first in four years, for the last financial year to September 1997. However, these accounts do not encompass Sensation, which opened in mid-September. The reduction in our deficit is a result of an 11 per cent increase in attendance for exhibitions which included Living Bridges, Braque and Giacometti; innovative fundraising; and cost reduction. This year has started well with Sensation and Victorian Fairy Painting. We hope it will continue well. David Gordon, Secretary, Royal Academy of Arts, London.

A Country Diary

HEALD GREEN, CHESHIRE: Shortly before Christmas a reader very kindly sent me an impressive booklet which told the story of his year of watching birds in the garden. Among the highlights of an obviously dedicated 12 months, it must have been the Goldfinch numbers at the winter feeding station that provided most pleasure — on one day in December, 175 birds visited the garden, a total which the recent Cheshire and Wirral Bird Report referred to as "potentially the largest ever flock to visit a British suburban garden". Quite a remarkable event, with the main attraction apparently being niger seed. Last week a friend reported a flock of finches making a daily appearance at the feeders. I went along to witness this gathering in a local garden and found about 125 birds taking turns to drop down from some tall oak trees on to a well-stocked feeding line of baskets, hoppers, and hanging tables. There were green-

finches, chaffinches, a few siskins and the occasional starling, no doubt attracted by the crowd, but by far the most numerous members of the flock were the goldfinches. I estimated that there were in this region of 100 of these brightly plumaged birds continually flying between the trees and the feeding area. Again the attraction seemed to be the niger seed, with a sunflower seed and a sunflower heart. These two spectacular examples demonstrate just how much this established British custom of feeding the garden birds has changed, with a bewildering variety of nuts and seeds having overtaken table scraps in popularity. The custom has grown thanks to publicity given to the plight of our winter birds by organisations such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the BTO, so that now an estimated 1 in 3 households provide food in the garden. This can only be good news for the birds, including the sparrowhawk. J.M. THOMPSON

150/11/10/10

Diary

Matthew Norman

FRESH from making a film version of Alas Campbell's erotic masterpiece *Basking With Bagpipes*, Mark Thomas turns to another of our leading comic characters, Richard Branson. For his Channel 4 show (Wednesdays at 11pm), Mark boarded Virgin's fibred Manchester to London train service. Having a fixed to the side various signs — "10,000 complaints unanswered", read one; "another — he rigged up a makeshift public address system and spent the journey broad-casting other thoughts to fellow passengers. On alighting at Euston, he was met by various police and Virgin staff, and has since received a formal written warning from the British Transport Police which points out that "placing signs on the outside of trains could have had serious consequences if they had blown off while these trains were passing at speed through stations." Having delivered this rebuke and concluded "your faithfully, Sir, Sergeant Jackson," the letter ends thus: "P.S. Enjoyed the show. Would appreciate a copy of the video."

ONE minute it farms out the crossword to computers, the next it enters the world of pornography. What's going on at the Daily Telegraph? I can barely write for shock after reading Boris the Jackal Johnson's interview with Susan de Vere, whose job it is to dream up surveys about things — usually sex — for a health and lifestyle magazine. All proceeds quietly until the last column, when, without warning, the Telegraph enforces a ban on the use of the word "anal". "Amateur snus invenit illud locum quoniam gamma appellatur?" he asks her. He declines to translate, but we must: "Has your lover found that place which they call 'G'?" (Apparently not, for the record.) I hardly know what to say. What does Telegraph editor Charles Moore make of asking ladies about their G spots, on the back page of the Telegraph, inches from the still-humanoid crossword? "I'm always in favour of Latin," comes the reply.

THE staffing arrangements of Derek Wyatt, Labour MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey, become more intriguing in an article for Dolly Draper's Progress magazine. Mr Wyatt reveals that he employs not only a "director of parliamentary office", as reported here last week, but a "director of constituency office" as well. When he calls to suggest the appointment of a third person as Director General of All Offices — to avoid confusion and clarify the chain of command — Mr Wyatt is impatient. "What's it to you?" he asks. Anyone wishing to apply for the forthcoming post of "director of media relations and courtesy to the press" should write to him at the House of Commons.

A LETTER arrives from yet another director, Peter McHugh, director of programmes at GMTV, takes umbrage at references to Mr Tony Blair's preference for his station over less cerebral outlets. Inviting us to mention the Guardian Media Group's stake in GMTV (although not explaining why), Mr McHugh whines: "I'm sorry we are 10 times more popular than Newsnight and Panorama. Ten times? On examination, Mr McHugh proves a bit of a Stephen Byers. "Well, if Newsnight reaches 900,000 a day, let's say 3 million a week, and our figures are 12 million... OK, let's say four times more popular." Mr McHugh has a powerful, cleverly conceived argument — let us not forget that the Daily Star massively outsells Time magazine — but what a shame to spoil it by being so careless with the numbers.

IN Fargo, North Dakota, we learn that Nick Striegles has retired as a veterinary surgeon and is retraining as a teacher. Mr Striegles got up his practice after nine years, reports Dog Today magazine, because he is allergic to animals.



New Tories, no new smell of success

Commentary

Hugo Young

THIS is a time when politics, if not dead, is said to be a big bore. Everywhere you look and read, you find the axiom being taken very seriously. From Newsnight on BBC2 to the Channel Four News, public affairs journalism is under threat because of the assumption that too few people want to watch it. The things of Parliament are, in this newspaper and all others, often reduced to a sideshow. One thing the vaunted competitiveness of the British Press has plainly not been good for is the space that affords to the substance of politics.

This uncivic and depressing premise, if true, exposes a paradox. The very time when the public is supposed to have switched further off the political world than ever is also the time when political parties rest their entire future on the opposite assumption. Tony Blair built New Labour round an appeal for individual mass

membership on a scale not lately dreamed of. Grass roots by the hundred thousand is what he envisaged, and so does William Hague, who yesterday launched the Renewed Conservative Party with an ambition to create "the single greatest mass volunteer party in the western world". Where are these people living? The Tories' modernisation is the least they can attempt. Having been through a near-death experience, they had to think about re-making themselves, and have chosen party democracy as the cure-all. The Fresh Future, their market-tested slogan, may sound like a deodorant, but the image is well-chosen. The party needs to start with a sweeter smell. The question, a serious one, is: is that all the people want? Hague begins where Blair began. The aspirations, sometimes the very language, are, by no accident, identical. Amid all this change, Hague says, "our values and our principles" will remain unaltered. We will be "changing our culture", but not our goals. The promise of urgent change sounds close to panic, but the assurances of continuity are Blairite. So are some proposed new bodies. A convention and an assembly, alongside the party conference, are part of some complicated New Tory testing, but there will also be a new "policy forum", to give the grass roots the illusion. New

Labour-like, of being consulted. With OMOV — one member, one vote — introduced for important Tory job appointments, one can be pretty certain of an early consequence to push Labour, inventors of OMOV, towards full enactment, now compromised by the trade unions' remaining bloc. All this makes sense. It could help produce the kind of healthy Opposition without which the British political system withers. In due course, governments that are often corrupt and always bad. But don't mistake the consequences. The premise of party democracy, in this manipulated day and age, has some odd ones. For one thing, the new Tory rules will strengthen the hand of the leadership. Behind the mask of mass accountability sits the dead weight of mass inertia. True, the parliamentary party will still have exclusive rights of challenge to the leader's tenure, and there could be 25 MPs (the stipulated 15 per cent to launch a contest) who will decide next year that Hague must go. If, in 1999, European elections, Welsh and English local elections still leave the Tories below 30 per cent, the party's appetite for regime might begin to churn. But the new system, culminating in OMOV, throughout the party, raises a heavy premium against disloyalty.

The members of the party will be about as potent as the shareholders in a company. Possessing the legal right to sack the board, they somehow never assemble the will to do so. Corridor coups, the lifeblood of Tory renewal in the past, are unlikely to be seen again. Habit and fealty will favour the incumbent, as they have long done in the Labour Party, no leader of which has ever unwillingly left his post. Professionally handled, the job of Tory leader looks like being equally well-protected. It seems a lot more sensible than it did nine months ago to bet on Mr Hague being there for a decade.

This has something to do, however, with a second product of the modern craving for a party of the masses. All parties have always sought large memberships. But the quest for a party of the masses in an age when evidence of mass interest in politics or belief in political ideas is a curious phenomenon. It puts all the weight on political technique rather than substance, on perception not conviction. It calls what can be sold, rather than what anybody, including the leader, particularly thinks. What the Blair-Hague era now signals with bipartisan effect, in short, is the commodification of politics.

It isn't to say there are no distinctive beliefs left. On Europe, the differences may yet become as great between

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS 9

Lloyd George knew my sitcom — get it?



Mark Steel

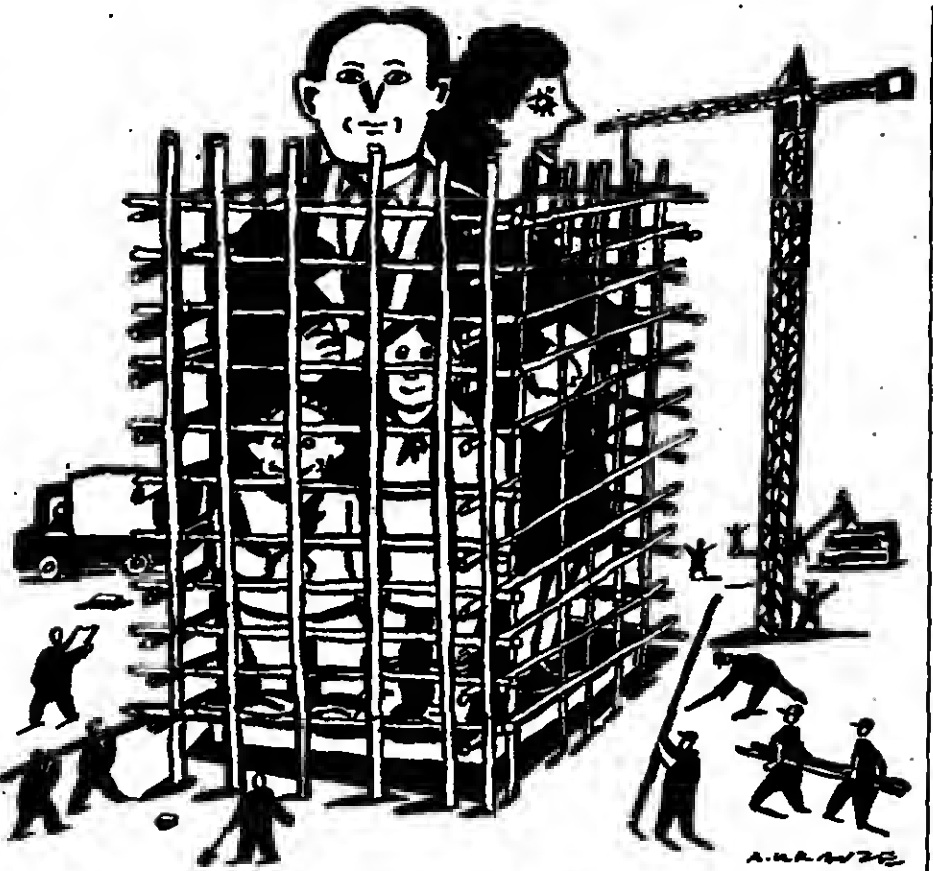
THE ONLY flaw in Oswald Mosley's character, according to the drama series currently being shown on Channel 4, is that he had a bit of a weakness for the ladies. Some viewers must be thinking "O that Mosley was a dreadful politician. Nearly as bad as Robin Cook." The writers of this show, Marks and Gran, have two drawbacks. The first is that as the writers of *Birds of a Feather*, they used to sitcoms. While it is why when Mosley humiliates Lloyd George with his dashing oratory, we see the Prime Minister musing "Herum huh pah", sitting down sharply and folding his arms in a huff. This is sitcom language for someone who's been nobbled. Maybe in the next episode Mosley will taunt Stanley Baldwin about the gold standard, causing Baldwin to shake his fist, about "Why you little ooh wait till I chase Mosley around the floor of the Commons and trip over the Despatch Box, landing head first in a bowl of baked beans, which we'd seen Ramsay MacDonald place there in the previous scene." The first programme ended more farcically than most sitcoms with Mosley having succeeded in exposing British crimes in Ireland. He was then shown doing what any ambitious politician would do in the circumstances. He went to a pub in Kilburn and sang "Come out you Black and Tans, come and fight me like a man" with the IRA.

Mosley was detested for his political influence and not because people thought that every night before going to bed he'd stab a poodle to death. A typical account by someone who remembers his effect reads: "During the thirties I was a pupil at Hackney Downs Secondary School. The intimate violence of the British Union of Fascists turned a pleasant enough life into one of apprehensive misery. Jewish people were afraid to venture out after dark." Many BUF members joined the Nazis during the war, including several who were enlisted into the Waffen SS. The writers of Mosley claim that later on he rejected antisemitism, which is a strange lie. He decided that the route to power was to hate blacks instead and stood as a candidate in Notting Hill after racist riots there. It shouldn't be surprising that Mosley is kind to Mosley. For it's based on two books, one by a man called Skidelsky who was a close friend of Mosley, and the other by Mosley's son, Mayne Channel 4 should make a drama about how Pot was a great fellow who was misunderstood, the research behind this son said "No, he was a real diamond my old man", and his mate he played darts with said "He'd do anything for you, that bloke." Or, as it might be said, the TV Times seems to take this view, describing the programme as a drama about "Britain's most famous fascist," the way you'd describe Eddy the Eagle as "Britain's most famous skydiver," as if it was just a career. Maybe Mosley's mum would meet her friends up the shops and they'd ask her "How's your Oswald's fascism coming along?" "Oo," she'd answer, "he's doing ever so well. He's been promoted to Führer now." "Well I expect that'll mean a rise won't it?" they'd say. "He might end up Britain's most famous fascist."

There could be guerilla war from the left over benefit cuts. Warning signals from transport union leader **Bill Morris**, as Labour prepares to recast the welfare state

Demolishing welfare

THE AIM of any welfare state should be to prevent, rather than merely relieve poverty. By that measure our welfare state is manifestly failing. Poverty has become widespread and, in many areas, an entrenched part of life and the community. So I do not believe that we can carry on as we are.



has got off to a good start, funded by the windfall tax in 25 billion worth of redistribution. Nevertheless, we need to see the work before we cut the welfare. And yet, I have a sense of foreboding. The signs in the international economy are far from being uniformly comforting. Even if only a slice of the Asian crisis gets exported to Europe, we will feel it. Their cold could mean at the very least a squeeze over here. The strong pound is already affecting jobs in manufacturing. European monetary union, even if Britain is not initially part of it, could mean a further squeeze.

In short, I believe that the government will have its work cut out progressing towards full employment. To avoid a major dislocation, which could wreck Labour's economic and social policy alike, it is critical that the government does not discard any further instruments of economic policy — in particular, the possibility of a reasonable increase in the FSR when free to do so.

I do not believe that full employment can be restored, and the main variable burden on the welfare state (unemployment) relieved, without a measure of government-led investment in the industrial and social infrastructure. Such initiatives have played a part in most major programmes of social reform here and abroad this century, and there is a crying need for all of them in Britain today.

We have a government with the will to solve these problems. To carry the nation with them in building a better society, we need a new emphasis on the values underpinning the effort.

Writer outraged



Harold Pinter

WE HAVE been reminded often over the last few weeks of Saddam Hussein's appalling record in the field of human rights. It is indeed appalling: brutal, pathological. But I thought you might be interested to scrutinise the record of your ally, the US, in a somewhat wider context. I am not at all certain that your advisers will have kept you fully informed. The US has supported, subsidised and, in a number of

cases, engendered every right-wing military dictatorship in the world since 1945. I refer to Guatemala, Indonesia, Chile, Greece, Uruguay, The Philippines, Brazil, Paraguay, El Salvador, Haiti, El Salvador, for example. Hundreds of thousands of people have been murdered by these regimes but the money, the resources, the equipment (all kinds), the advice, the moral support, as it were, has come from successive US administrations. The deaths really do mount up: 170,000 in Guatemala, 200,000 in El Salvador, 80,000 in El Salvador, 30,000 in Nicaragua, 500,000 in Indonesia — and that's just to be going on with. They are, every single one of them, attributable to your ally's foreign policy.

The devastation the US inflicted upon Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, the use of napalm, Agent Orange and the employment of new bombs which sprayed darts

inside peoples' bodies and finally wrenched their guts out was a remorseless, savage, systematic course of destruction which, however, failed to destroy the spirit of the Vietnamese people. When the US was defeated it at once set out to starve the country by way of trade embargo. The US invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965, Grenada in 1983, Panama in 1980, and destabilised and brought down the democratically elected governments of Guatemala, Chile, Greece and Haiti — all acts entirely outside the parameters of international law. It has given and still gives total support to the Turkish government's campaign of genocide against the Kurdish people. It describes the Kurdish resistance forces in Turkey as "terrorists" whereas it referred to its own vicious Contra force in Nicaragua as "freedom fighters". Its "covert" action against Nicaragua was de-

clared by the International Court of Justice in 1986, setting out in clear breach of international law. Over the last five years the UN has passed five resolutions demanding that the US stop its embargo on Cuba. The US has ignored all of them. All UN resolutions criticising Israel have been ignored, not only by Israel but also by the US, which turns a blind eye to Israel's nuclear capability and shrugs off Israel's oppression of the Palestinian people. The US possesses of course quite a handy nuclear capability itself. I would say it outstrips Saddam's ability to kill "every man woman and child on earth" by quite a few miles. If that wasn't enough it has substantial chemical weapons and has recently rejected two UN inspectors, one Cuban and one Iranian. It also reserves the right to deny access to certain "national security" zones. They are closed to inspection, as "inspection may pose a threat to the national security interests of the US". Isn't Saddam Hussein saying something like that?

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10 OBITUARIES

Martha Gellhorn

A witness to our world at war

THE streetcars of her hometown of St Louis, Missouri, shaped the life of Martha Gellhorn, who has died aged 89. Her suffragette mother and doctor father had raised her to confidence and campaigning, and, as a child, she had freedom: her peers did not; she roamed the city alone on those cars, looking in on lives unlike her own. "One bends one's one way and it stays bent," she drew long after.

She was briefly collegiate at Bryn Mawr, was a cub reporter surviving on a diet of doughnuts. Then at 21, in 1930, her life began with a steamer-class passage to Europe, \$75 and a suitcase. She went to Paris to become a foreign or, better still, a roving correspondent. Just like that.

Even for a girl who looked, as she once remarked, like the cartoon character Betty Boop — all hatred eyelashes — and had limitless insouciance, it did not happen quite like that. Gellhorn sold any old writing she could and got a "very high-class education" standing room at ground level to watch history as it happened.

Her learning process involved European poverty and politics and an affair, later a short marriage, with the radical journalist Bertrand Russell, who, as a youth, had been the lover of a middle-aged Colette. She innocently took a room in a bawdy-house and knowingly bought absurd Parisian couture cheap at the end of the season. She was also introduced to her first Nazi, "scrubbed and parrot-brained". They didn't teach a girl any of that at Bryn Mawr.

The process also covered returning to — and crossing — America, walking in on an oil boom and on the great Russian film director Sergei Eisenstein, who was failing to film in Mexico, and writing her first novel. It took her on to the payroll of the Federal Relief Agency, for which she filed reports on the lives of the forgotten poor, which read like epic captions for Depression photographs; she was sacked for inspiring local revolutions.

It allowed her the naivety to cadge room and board from HG Wells in London, where she wrote a vivid eye-witness account of a southern lynching she later admitted that she had never seen; and to accept the offer of President Roosevelt and his wife, Eleanor — her mother's campaigning friend — to stay in the White House, which was pretty homey then. She put up there in Abraham Lincoln's bedroom and was fed regular meals during an awkward patch, when her furious moral righteousness made her otherwise unemployable.

There she finished *The Trouble I've Seen*, fiction based on her own class investigations. It was published in 1936, with her portrait, blonde and elegant, on its dust jacket: this was a titillating combination and a success. She was immediately celebrated, but the hoopla by holidaying in Florida like a Key West bar called Sloppy Joe's, she ran into Ernest Hemingway, bulky in his "odorous Basque shorts". Two big celebs in a small town. His books had been her models. She said she had seen her face on *Troubles*. All afternoon and evening, they drank Papa Dobs, two-and-a-half jiggers of white Bacardi rum, juice of two fresh lemons, swirled in a rusty electric blender. It sounded like a Hollywood "meet-cute" — she walked into the bar in a black dress and high heels, with her mother's face in tow. The Bacardi and Bogart versions were merely re-makes. She

seems to have thought she had found the partner her nerve deserved. Hemingway was hooked.

He was also married and off to cover the Spanish Civil War. She decided to join the fight and him (perhaps not in that order), this time with a rucksack and \$50, a letter of introduction from Collier's magazine, and a notion that the "correct response to a war against fascism was simply to be present on the right side".

She thought that war correspondents reported the battle field, and was surprised, but willing, when one suggested that a description of ordinary life in besieged Madrid was worth sending home.

Collier's printed the piece, put her name on their masthead, and there she was, a war correspondent and Hemingway's lover — and under his patronage, eating his thinned supplies and sharing his mattress on the road, yet still stubbornly independent. Her reports from Spain were more candid than his. The ration portion of dried salted cod weighed as heavily as the shells. She did not have to pretend to be an authority.

One editor at Collier's appreciated and trusted her copy and, for eight years after that, she could go where she wanted and write what she saw. "I had the chance to see the life of my time, which was war," the British newspaper for total war the Czechoslovak army walking home after the German land-grab; the Finns democratic but frozen, fighting the Russians; the Chinese, in hunger and filth, out-enduring the Japanese invasion. Her base was a house outside Havana, which she had made over for Hemingway and herself. They married and settled in. They worked on fiction. But Gell-

horn wanted to be in on the war at last breaking out in Europe, and a crazy Caribbean sea-hunt for U-boats (with resulting, unpublished, extremely funny piece) was not enough. She was drinking daiquiris in a bar on the Mexican border when the newspaper boy hawked her the edition reprinting Pearl Harbor.

Hemingway was having a fine time with his sporting Cuban buddies chasing phantom Nazi subs. He had already done global conflict. Gellhorn failed to persuade him to engage with the world at war a second time around.

The marriage fractured. She reached London and followed the action in Europe and North Africa as closely as she could with, or usually without, official permission, and with directions from friends in useful places. She achieved a frontline cheese sandwich from K rations, or a Dutch slave labourer, recently freed, buying tulips in the ruins of a German city.

It seldom included any utterance, or even mention, of a politician. "All politicians are hores and liars and liars, I talk to people," she said. To read her dispatches (collected as *The Face Of War* and *The View From The Ground*) is to be granted instant access to where she was whenever it was. The business in peace was to settle down. As a woman divorced on the grounds of abandonment, Gellhorn made some random gestures to pacification. These included



Out on her own... 'I am a loner,' said Martha Gellhorn, 'I am not a team player'

horn was advised by her old buddy, the photographer Robert Capa, to demand a divorce. She did, then loosely attached herself to the 82nd Airborne through the bitter 1944-45 winter of the Battle of the Bulge, and also to its leader, the heroic General James Gavin. She was present when the chaotic mass of the Russian army swarmed up to the other Allies, she was in newly-liberated Dachau, at the apex of her anger, when peace was declared.

What the inmates told her there — that it had been less to protest or weep about what happened to them — was the antithesis of all she had believed in; she mistrusted Germany ever after. Her St Louis ancestry included both immigrant Germans and Jews.

About all of these places and people she wrote simply. An American prose style of Shaker plainness was laboured at by many of her contemporaries. To Gellhorn, it seems to have come naturally. She spoke that way. She believed real reporters did not take notes, but knew instinctively what remained forever important — trivia, the tone of the times. This might include a GI toasting himself a frontline cheese sandwich from K rations, or a Dutch slave labourer, recently freed, buying tulips in the ruins of a German city.

She dined on the way to General Gavin had married a nice young girl. Gellhorn's next love, David Gurewitsch (a protégé of Mrs Roosevelt) could barely cope with her. She was courted by Tom Matthews, a recently-retired editor of Time magazine, who was a handsome, profile and a sound mind, and they married. But he wanted an urbane life in Britain, and she missed the excitement, and even more the whole-soul engagement, of the fight

against fascism. "I am a loner. I am not a team player," she said once — she could certainly be unsociable, abrupt and grand — and "The ideal is to live five blocks away from a man who makes you laugh and is wrapped up in his work". The marriage perished after nine years.

And so, by the 1960s, she was wandering again, observing more of the 50-plus countries of her travels. She knew a lot about how people respond to place, especially when they respond by misbehaving. In that nonstoply funny book *Travels With Myself And Another*, she confessed how she misbehaved herself, how she was revolted by stench in west Africa and

daunted by dengue fever going up river by canoe. She repeatedly fell in love with countries, *affaires* which led her to hang curtains to impossible shacks. Her long-lasting final devotion was to a cottage on the Welsh borders,

which had demanding vegetables in the garden. Her association with Collier's had lapsed with her editor's death in the 1940s; thereafter, she had often to give herself assignments, and pay her own expenses, to satisfy her curiosity. For one long period, she had a writer's block for another, there was an editorial block against her copy — she was no longer a sexy novelty nor yet venerable, and the robustness of her New Deal attitude was out of fashion. Nevertheless, with help — which she remembered rather minimally from the Guardian — she reached Vietnam in 1966 to report the war (of which she was ashamed) that confirmed America as a colonial power. Her long perspective even-

post came an American edition of her report. I rang to thank her and suggest lunch. In her strong St Louis voice she rasped, "I loathe lunch. I drink".

In her Eaton Square flat, she took whisky on the rocks and offered me "a very good vodka someone gave me for Christmas". At 82, Gellhorn was sharper than almost anyone I had ever met. Slim, well made-up, elegant, she obviously cared about her appearance. She was quick to tell me mine needed improvement. "You ought to put your hair up," she said, examining my long hair with disapproval. "Looking good isn't just vanity. It's a public service."

The hair-up obsession was linked to her past. As a young woman, she was always chignoned, "until the Nazis ruined my hair". She had contracted an infection in Germany in 1933. Doctors in Nazi armbands botched her ear operation, so, with a huge bandage around her ear, without money or passport, she fled to Paris, ending up in the American Hospital. She never wore her hair up again.

We spoke about Nuremberg and I told her how watching hours of celluloid archive gave me the feeling that the trials only existed on film. "Don't forget I've been to Dachau," she replied. "I've seen Germany flooding with a mad stream of slave labourers. For me, the unreal people were the people on trial. I looked at them day after day and was forced to think about what crimes those men had committed." She talked of sleeping in a makeshift dormitory in a disused factory. "I came back from the trials and vomited night after night. It was impossible to hear all the testimony without a violent reaction. Then I thought, if this is what it like to live it, what was it like to die it?"

She spoke easily of the ageing process and blamed the onset of her arthritis on the British damp. Always spoilt by male attention, she noticed her "invisibility" with advancing age. "But," she announced, "there are advantages. Nobody is jealous once you get to 70 or 75, and then there is always the companionship of darling young men."

"Why do people talk of the horrors of old age? It's sweet. I feel like a fine old car with the parts gradually wearing out, but I'm not complaining. Those who find growing old terrible are people who haven't done what they wanted with their lives."

Martha Gellhorn, journalist, born November 8, 1908; died February 15, 1998



In at the front... Gellhorn at work in war-torn Europe

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Lord Granville

Three sides of politics

THE death of Baron Granville of Eye a few days after his 100th birthday was like that of an exhausted marathon runner, who has learned he actually ran an extra mile. Until just before the centenary celebrations, he was under the impression he was about to become 99. Prompted by Buckingham Palace, his daughter checked with Reading Registry Office and found he had been born on February 12, 1898, making him the Lords' eldest peer.

His tiny figure represented a lot of history. At 17, he went on a trip to Australia and joined the Australian Light Horse, serving in Gallipoli, then in Egypt and France. He was wounded three times. "I

wasn't badly wounded, except that I had fever, dysentery and yellow jaundice," he said. "I was a skeleton by the time they got me back to a hospital in Cairo. It was a miracle I survived". In the second world war, he served in the Royal Artillery as a captain. During 22 years as Liberal MP for Eye 1928-51, he served as private secretary to both Sir Herbert Samuel and Foreign Secretary Sir John Simon, attending all the pre-war conferences with Hitler.

After Granville lost Eye in 1951 (he was a sympathiser of the Wilson-Bevan view on the Korean war), he joined Labour, and tried unsuccessfully to make a comeback for his Suffolk seat as Labour's candidate in 1955 and 1959. He was elevated to the Lords by Harold Wilson in 1967.

His loyalty seemed firm. In his 1959 maiden speech, he protested that the defence secretary, Denis Healey, was being subjected to a campaign of character assassination. Initially, he was a fairly frequent Lords debater, mostly on economics, as was suitable for a small manufacturer with a long-standing interest in the subject.

His interest rather flagged when Labour was defeated in 1970. He turned his attention to writing thrillers at his Cheltenham home. He wrote two: *The Dominion Plan*, and *The King Pigeon*, which featured a woman head of Chinese intelligence, who planted a bug behind Harold Wilson's portrait of Gladstone. He also started a 12-volume opus, *The Light Horse and the Last Valley*.

In his 70s and 80s, he picked his subjects for occasional forays in the Lords. In 1980, he spoke knowledgeably about the Films Bill. In 1987, he spoke again about the "orchestrated character assassination" against Harold Wilson and then was being deployed against Margaret Thatcher, with the BBC as its spearhead.

He ended his political days as a crossbencher, largely, like Woodrow Wyatt, because of his admiration for Mrs Thatcher. She had once consulted him on politics early in her premiership. He rated her "the best prime minister since Churchill".

Andrew Roth
Lord Granville of Eye, politician, born February 12, 1898; died February 14, 1998

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

IN MEDIA Guardian, Page 4, yesterday, a key paragraph was cut from Roy Greenslade's article on Mirror Group, thus giving the impression that the company had paid \$287 million for the Independent title. This was the price paid for the Birmingham-based regional group, Midland Independent Newspapers. We apologise for the error.

IN THE early editions on February 13, a report on Page 9 carried the headline, Half to drop old guard in shadow reshuffle. It should have said Hagia. Apologies.

A FEATURE on cycling in the Jobs and Money supplement, February 7, omitted from a panel headed, Who to call, details of Britain's largest cycling organisation, the CTC, based at Godalming, Surrey (01483 417217). A graphic showing cycle insurance rates in Birmingham and Bournemouth, in each case quoted \$50 for CTC cover. This is for the organisation's Elite scheme, which offers worldwide cover. Basic cover, the

figure which should have been quoted, is \$35.

A PANEL accompanying a report headed, Ad monitors hit at college 'hype', Page 4, February 11, included the following: The Rudin College Claim — "For BTCC courses, the college has had 100 per cent pass rate for the last five years." Fact — only seven students had taken the course. This assertion is not true. In the period 1991-1995, 44 students took and passed the BTCC course.

ON PAGE 29, Friday Review, February 13, both Film Charts were labelled Top 10 US. The chart on the left showed the Top 10 UK. The gross takings for the US films were wrong and should be disregarded.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 5559 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 239 5857. E-mail: readers@guardian.co.uk

Birthdays
Yasser Arafat, chairman, Palestine National Authority, 65; Alan Bates, actor, 64; Jim Brown, actor, 63; Dr Gordon Cook, former president, Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, 66; Angela Eagle and her twin sister Maria Eagle, both Labour MPs, 37; Lord Foot, solicitor, 89; Biddy de

Franco, jazz clarinetist, 75; Prunella Gee, actress, 48; Fay Godwin, landscape photographer, 67; Bernie Grant, Labour MP, 54; Lord (Dong) Hoyle, Labour whip in the Lords, 68; Barry Humphries, entertainer, 64; Helen Jones, Labour MP, 68; Linda Kitson, war artist and teacher, 55; Andrew Leigh, general manager, Old Vic, 57; Julia McKenzie, actress, singer, 57; Genie Str John

Death Notices
BENEDICT, William (Bill), died 11th February 1998, aged 89. Buried at St. Paul's Church, London. Family will accept no condolences. Friends may call at 11.00 am to 1.00 pm on Friday 20th February 1998 at 2.00 pm.

Memorial Services
MACRAE, Professor Donald G. A commemorative service for the late Professor Macrae will be held on Thursday 19th March at 3.00 pm in the Founders' Room at the University of Glasgow, 100 University Street, Glasgow. Those intending to attend are asked to contact the Department of Sociology on 011 222 7262.

WATSON, Mary Giffen died peacefully 7 Sunday 15th February. Service Friday 20th February 1998 at 11.00 am at St. Andrew's Church, 20 St. Andrew's Road, Edinburgh. Donations to St. Andrew's Church, Edinburgh. Tel: 0171 222 7262.

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السؤال الثاني

Analysis The arms market

Weapons sales mean big money for Britain and her competitors. And if a dictator wants to buy? Easy: use taxpayers' money to clinch the deal.
By **Richard Norton-Taylor** and **David Leigh**

For sale (credit available for Iraqis)

AS BRITAIN finds itself again on the brink of war against Saddam Hussein, our military planners pause to reflect how the West helped to build up his power and prestige. Britain, our EU partners and other leading nations fell over themselves to supply Saddam with the latest technology. They provided him with material which could make chemical and biological weapons. They also offered financial incentives that helped him buy the weapons he wanted. The reasons were simple: profit and influence.

The short-sighted, ask-no-questions attitude ultimately cost these nations — or rather, their taxpayers — hundreds of millions of pounds, and influence, not only in Baghdad, but throughout the Middle East. And only now are their leaders discussing how to avoid a repetition of such a situation.

Today in Brussels, officials from the European governments will discuss an Anglo-French proposal for a joint code of conduct on arms sales. Yet a leaked draft of the proposal, reported in the Guardian last week, shows it contains serious loopholes. As a group of non-governmental organisations, including Oxfam, Amnesty International and Saferworld, pointed out, it would still allow states to export repressive equipment to dictatorships.

For example, it would permit EU arms exports to repressive regimes "if the end-use is judged to be legitimate, such as the protection of members of the security forces from violence". Governments would still be able to undercut each other in the search for lucrative weapons contracts; and it would not prevent exports from being diverted to war zones.

The proposals are based on criteria announced last year by the new Government which, as the organisations pointed out, they enabled Whitehall to approve 22 licences for the export of bombs, ammunition and surveillance equipment to Indonesia, and 66 licences for the sale of rifles, mortars, and armoured vehicles, to Turkey. Both countries have faced heavy criticism for their human rights records.

Yesterday the proposed code of conduct came under

attack from a very different source. Three former senior officers, including General Sir Michael Rose — who commanded UN forces in Bosnia — pointed out that during the Gulf war, Allied forces faced heavily-armed Iraqi troops who had been stocked up by EU nations in the 1980s. Unless the code includes explicit and restrictive criteria governing exports, tough consultation mechanisms and provision for parliamentary accountability, it may simply be business as usual, they warned. The proposals, drawn up a full two years after the Scott inquiry, were unlikely to Iraq "scandal", they said.

The Scott inquiry was set up in late 1992 after the collapse of the Matrix Churchill trial, where the key issue was the export of "dual use" equipment which can be used for civil and military purposes.

Yet it was reported last week that in 1994 — three years after the Gulf war and the imposition of tough sanctions against Iraq — a British subsidiary of Unilever obtained a licence to supply Baghdad with a growth medium which could produce anthrax. Anthrax is one of the biological weapons Iraq is now known to possess. The growth medium's principal use is medical, and the company said it acted in good faith. The Department of Trade and Industry, the lead Whitehall agency responsible for issuing export licences, is investigating the matter.

Whitehall has done its best to sabotage the Scott report. Despite the report's scorching criticism of export-licensing policy, the Government has still not produced concrete proposals to tighten up the system. Officials say they may be ready before the summer recess. Despite Scott's comprehensive attack on the secrecy surrounding arms exports, the Ministry of Defence responded by insisting that secrecy is vital. Without a hint of irony (in light of how we helped to arm Saddam), it said that "the national security of the UK may be jeopardised if a third country obtains details of an importing ally's defence inventory that potentially puts UK troops or civilians at risk during a conflict" (1).

As General Rose, who was joined by General Sir Hugh Beach and Admiral Sir James Ibbot, yesterday pointed out, there are compelling military reasons for tough rules covering arms sales to unstable regions. As far as ethics are involved, William Waldegrave, then Foreign Office minister, could not have put it better. In October 1989, a month after the Observer journalist, Parag Bazoff, was arrested in Baghdad for spying (he was executed five months later), Waldegrave said about Iraq that he could not think of "any major market where the importance of diplomacy is so great on our commercial position. We must not allow it to go to the French, Germans, Japanese, Koreans etc... A few more Bazoffs or another bout of internal repression would make this more difficult." Money taxpayers' money went out of the window, as well as ethics.



Fast — wanna make a deal? And no questions asked

New evidence has since emerged of how Margaret Thatcher insisted on supporting Saddam Hussein's bankrupt regime with generous loans. These were described by the Export Credits Guarantee Department, the government agency whose credit line promotes British exports, as "high-risk", right up to the eve of the 1990 Gulf war. Despite the warning officials boasted that "the bold strategy we have so far pursued, which was approved by the Prime Minister... has so far paid off handsomely" (2).

Losses on these loans totalling more than \$800 million have now been incurred by the British taxpayer, as the last of the unpaid debts fell due last year. At the time of the transactions, Thatcher overrode internal protests from the Treasury by claiming the Government-guaranteed loans were bringing benefits to British business and banks.

One major beneficiary was a British electronics firm, Racal, which was allowed to sell more than \$37 million of military radios to Saddam's armed forces on credit. The sale was backed by the British taxpayer. The existence of the military loans to Racal was kept secret; part of it was disguised as a loan for civilian projects. Other loans went on tracks to enable tank armies to operate on marshy ground, and on training gear for Saddam's fighter air crews.

Most of the loans were made through two banks, Mor-

gan Grenfell and Midland. These have now been reimbursed for Saddam's default by the British taxpayer, via the ECGD. Treasury and ECGD documents show that Margaret Thatcher personally negotiated \$500 million of credit for the Iraqis in 1983 and 1984, as the sinking oil price and the war with Iran propelled Saddam towards bankruptcy. He was known to have embarked on chemical warfare against the Kurds in northern Iraq, but the Prime Minister was untroubled.

TREASURY papers show that she believed the offer of generous loans would let the UK seal a march on the French and Germans, who were reluctant to incur more debt to Saddam. Saddam promised that Britain would become a preferred creditor. Further loans extending over more than eight years were being offered, even though ministers were warned of "a serious risk that Iraq will simply not be able to honour its pledges to the UK".

The fears were swept aside. Ministers believed that by the end of the 1980s, Iraq's oil reserves would solve Saddam's problems. They did not anticipate the Gulf war of 1990, and Saddam's subsequent pariah status, subject to sanctions and deprived of foreign exchange.

The 1980s, British ministers and officials went to Baghdad and offered further credit. The ECGD files show that they did so simply for fear that Saddam would otherwise renege on his debt-mountain to Britain. Nicolas Ridley, then Trade Secretary, successfully appealed to Margaret Thatcher to overrule Treasury anxieties and offer another \$260 million of loans in 1989.

By 1990, Saddam was not only gassing the Kurds. He was also known to be smuggling in large quantities of nuclear and nerve-gas technology, and ordered the hanging of Bazoff. Following a Cabinet meeting about the implications of the execution, Norman Lamont, then Chief Secretary to the Treasury, pleaded with his colleagues:

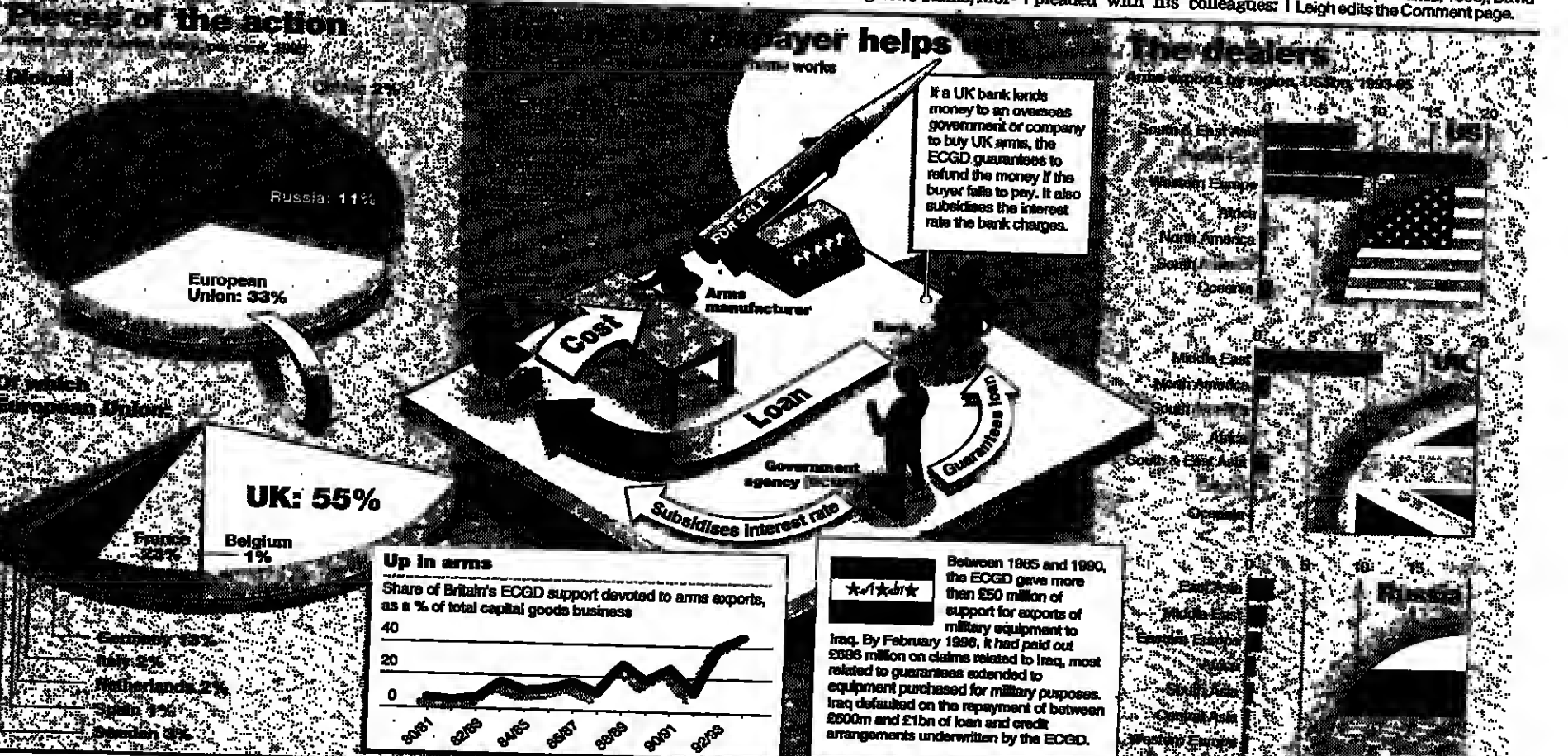
"We should cut our losses now, and close down the credit line. We are unlikely ever to find a better time."

Douglas Hurd, then Foreign Secretary, snuffed Lamont, and insisted that the Cabinet should continue to back Saddam: "I disagree that this is an ideal time to cut our losses in Iraq," he said. "In fact it could not be worse. We continue to be treated by the Iraqis as a favoured creditor... Our position is much better than most of our western competitors'."

He wanted to "draw a line" under Bazoff's murder. His cabinet colleagues agreed. Ridley said British policy was to "protect the department's very large exposure on the market". A halt to loans "would simply trigger off the default we have worked so hard to avoid".

Margaret Thatcher and her colleagues maintained financial support for Saddam right up to his unexpected invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, after which they were forced to send British troops against him.

Five years later, the World Development Movement calculated that taxpayers were footing a huge undeclared bill — estimated then at about \$380 million a year — for British weapons exports to countries which were either rich or had an appalling human-rights record, and sometimes both. The WDM said yesterday that Britain should seize the opportunity of this weekend's London summit of finance and employment ministers of the eight leading industrial nations to insist on arms sales to repressive regimes. Collective action, in the EU and on the wider international level, is crucial.



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Finance **Guardian**

Grocers hold merger talks

The two partners		
Somerfield		Kwik Save
• 675	Stores	680
• £5,000	Staff	25,000
• £785m	Stock market value	£478m
• £3.5bn	Share	£2.3bn
• £101m	Profits	£74m
• 1997	Operating	1997
• Bristol	Head office	Prestatyn

Somerfield and Kwik Save reveal £1.2bn plan, writes **Roger Cowe**

A SUPERMARKET shake-up is on the cards following a surprise announcement yesterday that Somerfield and Kwik Save are discussing a £1.2 billion merger.

A combination of the two second-tier operators would create the country's largest grocery chain, but City analysts were yesterday dismissing the threat to market leaders Sainsbury and Tesco.

It is not clear whether the two names would be preserved, or whether the merged business would trade under a new name. But there would certainly be some store closures, with a figure of 200 stores being mentioned yesterday as a possible fall-out. The two operate approximately 1,400 outlets.

Both Somerfield and Kwik Save have been struggling to compete with the superstore operators during the 1990s, and have been hampered by their heritage.

Somerfield emerged from the catastrophic buy-out of the Gateway group in 1989, which was floated on the stock market two years ago after its bankers wrote off huge losses.

Kwik Save grew rapidly in the 1980s with a unique format based on a small range of brands and products sold at low prices in small high street locations. But its formula has been successfully challenged by foreign competitors such as Aldi and Lidl, while the superstore leaders have also responded with the introduction of discount ranges.

The Welsh-based company has been reinvigorated under the direction of Hong Kong group Dairy Farm, which has owned almost a third of the shares since 1987. Kwik Save's other major shareholder is the fund management group PDM, which owns more than a fifth of both partners in the potential merger.



Somerfield, which is strong in South, is an obvious partner for Kwik Save, which is best-represented in North-west and Scotland. PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ANGLIS

Swift rebuff for Railtrack hopes of riding to Chunnel link rescue

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

RAILTRACK'S offer to bail out the Government over the £4 billion Channel Tunnel rail-link received a considerable setback last night, throwing the immediate future of the project into doubt.

The rail regulator, John Swift, has ruled that he will not ease Railtrack's regulatory regime to encourage it to finance the link.

A letter from Mr Swift's office to the pressure group, Save our Railways, says: "It is important that any involvement by Railtrack in the link is without detriment to the interests of passengers and freight customers on the existing network."

It goes on to say that Mr Swift will ensure that any arrangement is "without detriment to Railtrack's commitments, reflected in its access

charges, to the maintenance, renewal and enhancement of the network." The letter stresses that the regulator will be looking for "clear public commitments and targets for a better railway" in Railtrack's management statement next month. It says that Railtrack has been advised of this approach.

The letter was last night seen as a reverse for Railtrack, even though it has never expressed wild enthusiasm for the project. It is more interested in obtaining the infrastructure of the London Underground, and seems only prepared to complete half the tunnel link, up to the M25.

SOR said last night: "Railtrack has been conducting a campaign to give the impression that its obligation to invest in the national network will be reduced so that it can be the 'white knight' to rescue the Channel link project. The regulator's judgment leaves that strategy in tatters."

SOR's campaign director, Jonathan Bray, said: "It would be completely unacceptable for Railtrack's already inadequate investment plans to be further reduced to cross-subsidise the link. The privatised rail industry receives £5 million a day in public subsidy. It cannot be siphoned off in subsidising Railtrack's empire building."

The deputy prime minister, John Prescott, has until next week to decide the fate of the link. He has given London and Continental Railways 30 days to come up with an unlikely alternative financial plan to save its bid, and if Railtrack fails by the way, no other rescuers are in sight.

Eurotunnel's group chairman, Patrick Ponsolle, yesterday backed the completion of the link as essential for both the UK economy and the long term future of Eurotunnel. He said that opting to complete only part of the 68-mile link between St Pancras station

and Folkestone would not solve London's rail capacity problems or help commuters.

Speaking after the publication of its Eurotunnel's figures, which show a sharp fall in overall losses from 2685 million in 1996 to 2611 million last year, Mr Ponsolle said that a link would put the UK on a par with France and Belgium.

They have already built fast rail links to the Channel coast from Paris and Brussels.

Mr Ponsolle said that a partial route should only go ahead on the understanding that it was seen as the first stage of the full project. A shorter route would not address the problem of capacity within London's rail network.

Thorn chief quits as profits slide

Tony May

THE chief executive of Thorn quit yesterday as a profit warning wiped more than £30 million off the stock market value of the high-street rental group.

The group's shares fell 6 per cent to 146p after a statement revealed that profits would be at the lower end of City expectations and there was a question mark over next year's figures.

Chief executive Mike Metcalf, who has seen the group's market worth drop from £1.7 billion when it was split from the RMI music group in 1996 to £540 million yesterday, will leave with a compensation payment of just under £350,000.

He will step aside to allow his successor, Steve Marshall, formerly financial director, to complete and implement the company's strategic review.

Mr Marshall denied that there had been pressure from investors for Mr Metcalf to go. But, having started the review of the business last November after seeing first-half profits slide by nearly a third, Mr Metcalf had decided someone else should complete the review.

City analysts said they were likely to cut current-year forecasts from £125 million to between £115 million and £120 million. They were worried by a warning that profits in 1998/99 would be affected by a decline in the group's British rental-revenue base.

Alongside the warning, Mr Marshall said that operating profit before exceptional items fell by a third, to £28.8 million, in the nine months to December 31.

Trading conditions in the UK and the United States remained tough, and there had been a decline in the worldwide rental revenue base, he said.

Notebook

No lost sleep over this union



Edited by
Alex Brummer

THE sight of Somerfield and Kwik Save coming together in a £1.2 billion supermarket merger is hardly likely to give Lord (David) Sainsbury or Tesco chairman John Gardiner many sleepless nights. As retailers both Kwik Save and Somerfield are at the lower end of the market — long abandoned by the giants of the industry — and both have been extremely average financial performers.

Moreover, this is not a merger that will trouble too many private investors. Both companies are tightly held. The dominant shareholder in Kwik Save is Culverdale Investments, which is a creature of the Jardine Matheson trading empire, with fund managers PDM (now part of the SBC/UBS) not far behind with an 18 per cent chunk. PDM is also the dominant player at Somerfield, where it and a tightly-knit group of institutions including the Halifax own most of the shares — a legacy of its previous incarnation as Icos. So this is a deal which is likely to be settled by a few big investors in a darkened room, each interested in maximising the value of underperforming assets.

In terms of size the new group would actually have a 7 per cent market share, which would put it just behind Sainsbury — which has had on-off negotiations with Asda — with 8.1 per cent of the retail food market. If the PDM and others decide that a merger is the best course for Kwik Save and Somerfield then the likelihood is, as in other industries, that it might force a further round of consolidation.

There are, as always, other scenarios here. The recent trend for retailers is back into the cities, a move which could be quickened by John Prescott's brown field development rules. Since both Somerfield and Kwik Save have inner-city assets, it is entirely possible that Tesco, developing its metro store concept, might decide there is some value in stepping into this fray. After all Marks & Spencer has been busy exploiting the Littlewoods retreat from city centre retailing by putting 16 of its former stores under the St Michael umbrella.

Fraud options

REMAINING doubts that a building behind the move to take juries out of serious fraud trials ought to disappear in the light of the Home Office green paper on the subject. The Government remains "completely open" on the issue, apparently, but juries remain an option, but

only one out of eight, which is no way to treat a jury as distinguished as the symbol of justice perched on top of the Old Bailey.

Furthermore, the careful image of neutrality slips inside the document. Already, the Home Office has decided trial judges will adjudicate on the appropriate forum — jury or non-jury — in each case, discarding alternatives. Already it has ruled six to be the minimum number of so-called special jurors and five to represent the minimum quorum for a verdict.

True, there are problems with some very large and complex fraud trials. The September 1996 collapse of Maxwell II raised real concerns about the ability of trial judges will adjudicate on the appropriate forum — jury or non-jury — in each case, discarding alternatives. Already it has ruled six to be the minimum number of so-called special jurors and five to represent the minimum quorum for a verdict.

And two separate issues have become confused, the legitimate disquiet at disintegrating cases (Blue Arrow would be one example) with the illegitimate belief that an acquittal (as in Maxwell) is somehow a "failure".

All that said, and assuming tinkering is inevitable, the "special" jury — composed of qualified people — may be the least damaging of the main options, as it at least preserves the jury principle. Sad to say, it is the option least appealing to a Labour Government likely to balk at the prospect of the professional classes trying their own members.

Expect the worst, either a judge sitting alone or with a fraud tribunal.

Brown's way

IT WAS in October that the World Bank president James Wolfensohn abruptly suggested at a Hong Kong press conference that if Britain's Gordon Brown was as anxious about debt forgiveness for the most highly indebted poor countries, then he should put his hands in his pocket rather than talk about it.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, to his credit, has now done precisely that. With the debt forgiveness package in Mozambique in jeopardy, as a result of a £100 million shortfall in relief of bilateral debt, Mr Brown is offering a further £10 million of taxpayers' money to start the ball rolling. The intention is to tempt the other G7 countries into making similar scale contributions, in keeping with burden sharing arrangements.

The US, which has become pretty keen on Africa should be able to come through despite Congressional tardiness on these matters. Which means it will be up Germany, Japan and Italy to make up the difference. It should be easier for Mr Brown as chairman of the G7 to convince them, now that Britain has cleared a path.

S&N spends £206m on round of Nomura pubs



Opening time... more Rat & Parrot café-bars like this one in London's St Martin's Lane are on the way. PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEAVER

Dan Atkinson

BITAIN'S biggest pub owner, the Japanese bank Nomura, has slimmed its 4,309-strong estate with the sale of 311 pubs to the brewer Scottish & Newcastle. The £206 million deal consists mainly of pubs on long leases.

In the latest twist in what has become a brewing industry kaleidoscope, Scottish will, in turn, have to lose 311 of its existing houses in order to stay within government limits. This deal comes within weeks of Nomura-backed Wizard Inns buying 37 pubs in the south of England.

Yesterday's deal involved the chief Nomura pub vehicle, the Grand Pub Company, which had signed a five-year supply agreement with Scottish in January. Grand Pub was formed last year to buy the Intreprenuer chain and Spring Inns group from joint owners Fosters and Grand Metropolitan for £1.2 billion.

Nomura is believed to be planning to hold and develop its pub estate until around the turn of the century, at which point it will sell or float the assets at a handsome profit.

The pubs in yesterday's deal were chosen by Scottish because of their suitability for conversion to the brewer's "branded concepts". These include the suburban pub-restaurant chain Chef & Brewer, the Rat & Parrot high-street café-bars, the community-pub chain John Barras and the T&J Bernard ale houses.

Scottish said at least 60 of the new outlets would be converted within a year of acquisition and that by 2003 the brewer would own 2,350 managed pubs, of which two-thirds would be "branded".

Chief executive Brian Stewart said the Nomura pubs were available at a realistic price. Scottish will preserve the pubs' current rights to substantial beer discounts, guaranteed to September 1999.

ICI relegates football stake

Tony May

ICI'S involvement in football is about to become a sidelight to its corporate history.

In 1986 the company which had 10,000 employees in the Middlesbrough area, bought a 25 per cent stake in the local team for a relatively small sum.

Now a slimmer ICI is selling off assets; it has raised £3.7 billion so far and may raise as much as £5 billion as it switches focus from bulk chemicals to speciality lines. In the process it has slimmed its Teesside work force to some 5,000 and is planning to sell its stake in the club, which has grown into what might be a £10 million investment.

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When ICI took its stake, the club had attendances of about 4,000 and a rundown stadium. Now it has a new stadium and a gate of 30,000. It made a profit of £2 million on turnover of £14 million in 1996 and is likely to be promoted to the Premier Division this season.

An ICI spokesman said that while the sale of the stake was under consideration no deal was imminent.

"ICI became involved in Middlesbrough not on a business basis. It was just part of our community involvement," he said. "Now the club is back on a sound footing, why retain the investment? It is certainly not a case of cutting and running." — ICI is a chemicals company, not a sports and leisure group.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.39	France 9.71	Italy 2.889	Singapore 2.70
Austria 20.45	Germany 2.50	Japan 1.08	South Africa 1.88
Belgium 58.52	Greece 461.01	Netherlands 3.26	Spain 244.40
Canada 2.20	Hong Kong 12.33	New Zealand 2.77	Sweden 13.04
Cyprus 0.85	India 63.43	Norway 12.12	Switzerland 2.38
Denmark 11.14	Ireland 1.7814	Portugal 297.45	Turkey 254.060
Finland 8.89	Israel 5.89	Saudi Arabia 6.04	USA 1.80

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel)

Johnstone solves Els question

David Davies
in Johannesburg

THE T-shirts ask the question "Who Els", they say on the front, and on the back they answer, "But Ernie". Well, yesterday it was someone else: it was Tony Johnstone, who after the most dogged display imaginable, outlasted Ernie Els to win the Alfred Dunhill South African PGA Championship.

After a final round at the Houghton golf club that finished some 22 hours after it had begun to start, Johnstone's level-par 72 for a 17-over 271 was good enough for a two-stroke victory over Els, who finished with his first title for four years and his first on the European Tour since 1992.

He won \$66,000. Els took away \$48,000 and the leading Briton was Phillip Price of Northampton, whose sixth place earned him \$14,800. Greg Norman made minus \$128 or, looked at another way, plus \$300,000 (\$183,000). The latter was paid to him to turn up, the former the fine levied by the South African tour for not appearing on the 10th tee yesterday.

Norman, eight under and in contention, decided that he had a more pressing engagement in the United States where he was due to host a fund-raising event at his club, The Medallist, in Florida, for the Republican party.

The fine of £1,000 was imposed under a section headed "Injurious Conduct" and it is difficult to imagine anything more injurious to an event than to treat it with the contempt that Norman did this one, the second most important championship in this country after the South African Open.

But what financial penalty would seriously inconvenience the multi-millionaire Australian? Certainly not £128. Not even the \$5,000 Roman Raftery was fined for walking out of the 1991 US Open because he was not in the clubhouse.

The extra day was made necessary by the loss of 2½ days because of persistent lightning and Johnstone did well to control himself through the long hours of waiting. There is no more formidable opponent against whom to compete head-to-head than Els, even though Johnstone started with a three-stroke advantage for the remaining 10 holes.

Els made the first indentation in that lead at the 11th hole by holing from 10 feet for a birdie and saw Johnstone slip out from nine feet. Another stroke went at the 12th where Johnstone, after being in the rough and in a greenside bunker, missed a four-foot par putt. Then, when Els levelled at the long 14th by holing from 22 feet, it looked as though sheer class was going to prevail.

But Els's tee shot at the short 15th was a foot short of perfect, plugged in the face of a bunker, and that meant Johnstone's par was good for a one-shot lead. Els holed from 15 feet at the 16th to level matters again and the momentum appeared to be with the big man.

Not so. Johnstone hit a wonderful tee shot at the short 17th to four feet, read the putt perfectly to break fully 10 inches from the right, and the ball dropped into the hole on its last roll. It was, as it happened, the winning putt for it induced Els to go for a big drive at the 18th, which he pushed into the rough, and he finished with a bogey.

And the difference between victor and runner-up? In Johnstone's words: "He's so long and strong. I was born a runt and I'll always be a runt, but I'm a determined runt."

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The waiting is over... Tony Johnstone on his way to victory in the South African PGA Championship yesterday, when Greg Norman was conspicuous by his absence. PAUL SEVENS

Maier crowns his anxiety with gold

Pete Nichols

IF there were any after-effects from Hermann Maier's monster crash in the downhill on Friday the 13th he did not show in the Super-G yesterday. The Austrian rode the mountain like a man possessed, finished six tenths of a second clear of the field and, three days after a crash the video of which he cannot bear to watch, claimed his first Olympic gold medal.

"I could not be a fool," said Maier. "As much as I ski aggressively, my brain told me today to be careful and cautious. I wasn't scared to go out again, but anxious."

Maier was the eighth skier down the Happonen course, the early standard having been set by his compatriot Hans Knauss. The 25-year-old looked anything but careful and cautious as, at each time check, he dipped inside Knauss's marks.

When he needs to, Maier gets lower on his haunches, lessening resistance and helping his balance, but the key to his skiing is his attack. He enters the gates at angles others would not dare to.

Knauss shared the silver medal with the Swiss Didier Cuche, taking Austria's total to seven from the opening four alpine events.

Maier still shows trepidation towards the International Ski Federation (FIS). During the downhill the winner Jean Luc Crugnot reported that a gate at the point of Maier's later fall had been moved two metres. "I was not told," said Maier. "The only way I could have taken that turn was with a tank."

If the FIS did have the gate moved and competitors were not informed, it can count itself lucky that Maier got up and walked away.

Katja Seizinger of Germany won the women's downhill, running back-to-back to the men's Super-G on a different piste, and thus became only the second alpine skier in Olympic history to retain a title. Alberto Tomba was the first. Seizinger also led the field in the downhill section of the combined, though Sweden's Pernilla Wiberg is likely to overtake her in the slalom discipline.

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Lingfield (A.W.)

TOBY PALEY	TOP FORM
2.10	Stilet
2.40	Mr Frosty
3.10	Trillium
3.40	Thornhill
4.10	North Arrow
4.40	North Arrow

2.10 DORSETT MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES 3YO	1m 22.168 (4 declared)
1/10	53 Mr Frosty (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

2.40 RHONE HANDICAP	1m 22.806 (10 declared)
1/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

3.10 J CHEEVER LOOKUP OF AWY COURSE RECORD HANDICAP	3YO
1/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

3.40 AWESOME POWER CLAIMING STAKES	1m 22.832 (6 declared)
1/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

4.10 AINSIE HANDICAP	1m 22.420 (6 declared)
1/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

Leicester meeting plus form guide

TOBY PALEY	TOP FORM
2.20	Colony
2.40	Colony
3.10	Colony
3.40	Colony
4.10	Colony

2.20 WHEN HANDICAP CHASE	2m 11.015 (5 declared)
1/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

2.50 VICARAGE CLAIMING HURDLE	2m 22.558 (15 declared)
1/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

3.20 THURNEY MAIDEN CHASE	2m 11.538 (16 declared)
1/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

3.50 TRIAL HANDICAP CHASE	2m 11.015 (5 declared)
1/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

4.20 SOMERBY JUVENILE HURDLE 4YO	2m 23.155 (12 declared)
1/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
2/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
3/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)
4/10	5000 Stilet (Mr J. Stiles 9-0)

Brittain spearheading attack on World Cup

Chris Hawkins

USO, twice victorious in the Hong Kong Vase and the winner of over £16m in prize money, heads the 11 British entries for the \$1m Dubai World Cup next month.

Oliver Brittain plans to send his remarkable three-year-old to Dubai on March 12 giving him just over two weeks to acclimatise before tackling the mile-and-a-quarter contest on sand.

"He's in very good form and I'm very happy with him," Brittain says. "I took the Hong Kong race in December in his stride and he's been ticking over on the all-weather and has had three canters on the grass."

Luso, who is still an entire, finished ninth behind Singapur in the Dubai race last year, appearing not to handle the surface, but the ever-optimistic Brittain is confident he will do much better this time.

"Once they've had experience of it they know more the time," he explains. "Needle Gun ran badly on it two years ago but last season finished second in the Dubai Duty Free so I'm not worried."

"The only problem is whether Luso will get into the final lineup of 14. He's not rated that high in the International Classifications because he's done nearly all his winning abroad but if he doesn't get in then I'll run him in the Dubai Turf Classic instead which is worth \$75,000."

Brittain seems to be worrying unnecessarily about making the cut as Luso is rated 120. The American star Gentleman at 131 is the highest-rated horse in the race which has attracted a total entry of 139 including the Champion Stakes runner-up, Bahareh (rated 125), Bahareh (121), Bahareh, trained by John Dunlop, is far from a certain runner, however, and a decision about whether he is sent over will be made early next month.

The 11 British entries are: Bahareh, Busy Flight, Centre Stalls, Crimson Tide, Gothenburg, Luso, Needle Gun, Position, Romanov, Statistician and Stagnant Star.

Kendal Cavalier, a six-year-old, is among several Martell Grand National hopefuls in an entry of 19 for Saturday's John Durrant National Trial at Chesham.

Rod Millman, Kendal Cavalier's trainer, emphasises that he will not run unless he is in the handicap or just three or four pounds out of it.

Adrian Maguire returns to the saddle at Leicester this afternoon after an absence of six weeks with a broken wrist.

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Football

Gullit's Blue period gets Stalin-esque reworking as the Bridge spin doctors play didn't-care-enough trump card



Jim White

WE've met the woman who couldn't pass her driving test, the hotel manager whose cheese-grater voice and the two girls with a pathological inability to

remain in underwear while on holiday in Ibiza. Now, step forward the latest star of the day on the wall television documentary: the football manager apparently incapable of completing the simplest sentence without a shouted reference to the procreative act.

Yes, Sunderland's Peter Reid, central character in BBC's new six-part series, *Premier Passions*, is revealed as a man who makes Viz comic's Roger Mollie look linguistically restrained.

According to some of the advance publicity for the programme, we are supposed to be shocked by Reid's tongue. Far from that, one imagines that most Sunderland fans, settling down in front of the television next Tuesday to see if they can spot themselves in the half-time pie queue, will be delighted by their boss's intemperate response to defeat because there is no doubt that Reid cares for their club. Passionately, absolutely, blood-pressure threateningly, he cares.

Sadly it is now too late, but it would have made an intriguing point of comparison to have popped an electronic fly on the dressing-room wall at Stamford Bridge and seen how Ruud Gullit behaved in similar circumstances. Although if the Stalin-esque post-rationalisation of his contribution to Chelsea's success is to be believed, Gullit probably wouldn't have been around to be much on camera.

Instead the lens would have caught a cogent analysis of the game delivered by Gullit, who was disturbed only by Gullit sticking his head round the door to deliver an impetuous phrase ("Work it out for yourselves lovely boys," perhaps) before disappearing off on his Harley to spend more quality time with his bank balance. This is the image we now have of Ruud Gullit: he was no Peter Reid. Indeed the PR campaign to turn around the potentially explosive response to Gullit's sacking from Stamford Bridge has been exemplary; and it needed to be to keep the fans onside, particularly when it emerged yesterday that some of them face a 47 per cent rise in the price of their season ticket next season.

Initially, we were told that Gullit had to go because he was greedy. Given what he had delivered, few Chelsea fans would have objected if he made the directors of Camelot look like St Francis of Assisi. Sensing this might not be enough to win the argument, word leaked from the Bridge that he really wasn't that involved. Rex and the backroom boys did everything; Gullit was just a figurehead, again most of the time in the stand would hardly have accepted that as sufficient grounds for a P45, if he had done nothing else, it was his presence which had delivered Vialli, Zola and Di Matteo.

But then came the crunch piece of spin: Gullit didn't care enough. He was only interested in the club as a vehicle for his own ego (which means Chelsea are a 48-wheeled articulated low-loader with police outriders, presumably). For the fan this is a crime deserving of punishment much greater than redundancy. Not that the charge levelled at those asset strippers of Brighton and Doncaster.

Chelsea fans face huge price hike

John Duncan

CHelsea season-ticket holders had another rude awakening this morning when the renewal forms for 1998-99 arrived on the door at 47 per cent.

Seats in the Matthew Harding Stand, for example, will cost £525, an increase of £170 on this season. If Chelsea are not drawn at home in Cup competition, that will work out at £27-63 per match — and if renewals are not received by April 15, the price goes up to £245. Cup matches were excluded from this season's price, but are included in the new offer.

The most expensive season ticket will cost a staggering £1,250, confirming Chelsea as the dearest place to watch football in England. "Surely this increase would have been enough to keep the

most successful manager we have had for 27 years," said one season-ticket holder, Ron Coello, yesterday. "But he was just being greedy, wasn't he?" There was similar anger from other Chelsea fans, but an untypical silence from David Mellor, usually a vocal commentator on any football issue, especially those involving Chelsea.

"It would not be appropriate to comment on Chelsea matters," he said. An assistant in his office said that he had received the forms and would certainly be renewing. Tony Banks, the sports minister and another Chelsea fan, is abroad at the moment and was not available for comment.

The rise is embarrassing for the forthcoming Mellor. As chairman of the government's Football Task Force he has heard persistent complaints by supporters about the problem of pricing in football. However the only firm solution suggested so far, the legalisation of limited seat racing, has apparently been ruled out by the government.

Another Task Force member, Dr Adam Brown of the Football Supporters Association, said: "Increases on that scale were previously justified by clubs as covering the cost of ground improvements. But now that work is done this sort of increase is totally out of order. We have argued that ordinary supporters are being priced out of the game and this shows this is true."

The FSA says one solution would be the chance to pay for season tickets over a longer period. "It is obviously in Chelsea's interest to have the money early so they can earn interest on it," added Dr Brown. "But what sort of people can come up with that sort of money just like that, before April?"

Makin making trouble for Lee as Maine Road revolt grows

Derek Potter

MANCHESTER City seemingly in free fall towards the Second Division, face moves by powerful shareholders to oust the chairman Francis Lee. Two factions are planning to take control at Maine Road and Juventus are also regarded as bidders.

Lee, whose group gained control four years ago, insists he will not resign and is standing by the manager Frank Clark.

The mounting pressure for action follows an attack on Lee and Clark by David Makin, who with John Wardle, his business partner in JD Sports, invested £5 million in a new share issue. The power key at City is held by Stephen Boler, a 24 per cent shareholder.

"I think there is a massive chemistry problem with the club," Makin said. "I will be doing my best to remove the chairman. I don't know whether he is being blood-minded or what. If he has any pride he should walk away. There are people ready to take over."

City have taken only three points from the last 15 but Saturday's home 1-0 defeat by Bury attracted a crowd of nearly 30,000 and a new action group called "Free the Manchester 30,000" led by Dante Friend, promises demonstrations at the game against Ipswich at Maine Road tomorrow.

Dave Wallace, editor of the *King of the Rix* fanzine, sided with Makin. "The time has come for Lee to go," he wrote. "I hope for championing his arrival four years ago."

Frank Burrows has become manager of Cardiff City for the second time. Burrows, who had been coaching and scouting for West Ham, previously managed City from 1986-88.

Darren Purse, the Oxford United central defender, has completed a player-plus-cash move to Birmingham City, with the striker Kevin Francis moving in the opposite direction.

Hutchison on way to Everton

Letters, page 8

EVERTON's manager Howard Kendall yesterday defended one player while attempting to sign another, *writes Ian Ross*.

After further hacking Duncan Ferguson, who was sent off against Derby on Saturday, and resisting calls for him to be stripped of the captaincy, Kendall set up a deal which should see Sheffield United's Don Hutchison arrive at Goodison Park this morning.

Kendall has agreed a £1 million package with his former club, with the reserve defender Jon O'Connor moving to Bramall Lane.

Hutchison, a former Scottish Under-21 midfielder, is set to return to Merseyside four years after he was shipped the door by Liverpool.

After the sales of Andy Hutchinson and Gary Speed yielded £2 million, Kendall would also like to sign West Ham's Northern Ireland midfielder Steve Lomas.

Stoke City yesterday signed Kyle Lightowler from Everton for £200,000. The 29-year-old Bermudian striker was recently on loan at Fulham.



New man at Ibrox... Dick Advocaat was Rangers' first choice to succeed Walter Smith

Advocaat to move in at Rangers

DAVID MURRAY, the Rangers chairman, confirmed yesterday that Dick Advocaat, at present with PSV Eindhoven, will succeed Walter Smith as manager on July 1, *writes Patrick Glenn*.

It is understood that, because of a "get-out" clause in Advocaat's contract with the Dutch club, which was not due to expire until the summer of 1999, Murray will not even have to pay compensation.

Advocaat himself confirmed his appointment, ending weeks of expectation in Glasgow. The Dutchman's appointment has been Scottish football's worst-kept secret.

Advocaat, 50, is a close friend of the Celtic coach Martin Janssen, who tried to lure Advocaat to Feyenoord, where he was technical director, in 1990. But Advocaat be-

came assistant to Rinus Michels with the national side at Italia 90.

Pools Forecast

FA CUP	
1 Arsenal	2 West Ham
3 Coventry	4 Chelsea
5 Liverpool	6 Tottenham
7 Manchester United	8 Aston Villa
9 Southampton	10 Blackburn
11 Sheffield Wednesday	12 Norwich
13 Ipswich	14 Derby
15 Reading	16 Middlesbrough
17 Stoke	18 Man City
19 Tranmere	20 Bury

Results

FOOTBALL	
1 Arsenal	2 West Ham
3 Coventry	4 Chelsea
5 Liverpool	6 Tottenham
7 Manchester United	8 Aston Villa
9 Southampton	10 Blackburn
11 Sheffield Wednesday	12 Norwich
13 Ipswich	14 Derby
15 Reading	16 Middlesbrough
17 Stoke	18 Man City
19 Tranmere	20 Bury

Tennis

1 Andre Agassi	2 Pete Sampras
3 Andre Agassi	4 Pete Sampras
5 Andre Agassi	6 Pete Sampras
7 Andre Agassi	8 Pete Sampras
9 Andre Agassi	10 Pete Sampras
11 Andre Agassi	12 Pete Sampras
13 Andre Agassi	14 Pete Sampras
15 Andre Agassi	16 Pete Sampras
17 Andre Agassi	18 Pete Sampras
19 Andre Agassi	20 Pete Sampras

Baseball

1 New York Yankees	2 St Louis Cardinals
3 New York Yankees	4 St Louis Cardinals
5 New York Yankees	6 St Louis Cardinals
7 New York Yankees	8 St Louis Cardinals
9 New York Yankees	10 St Louis Cardinals
11 New York Yankees	12 St Louis Cardinals
13 New York Yankees	14 St Louis Cardinals
15 New York Yankees	16 St Louis Cardinals
17 New York Yankees	18 St Louis Cardinals
19 New York Yankees	20 St Louis Cardinals

Winter Olympics

1 USA	2 Canada
3 USA	4 Canada
5 USA	6 Canada
7 USA	8 Canada
9 USA	10 Canada
11 USA	12 Canada
13 USA	14 Canada
15 USA	16 Canada
17 USA	18 Canada
19 USA	20 Canada

Sport in brief

1 Greg Rusedski	2 Andre Agassi
3 Greg Rusedski	4 Andre Agassi
5 Greg Rusedski	6 Andre Agassi
7 Greg Rusedski	8 Andre Agassi
9 Greg Rusedski	10 Andre Agassi
11 Greg Rusedski	12 Andre Agassi
13 Greg Rusedski	14 Andre Agassi
15 Greg Rusedski	16 Andre Agassi
17 Greg Rusedski	18 Andre Agassi
19 Greg Rusedski	20 Andre Agassi

Team talk

1 Arsenal	2 Everton
3 Arsenal	4 Everton
5 Arsenal	6 Everton
7 Arsenal	8 Everton
9 Arsenal	10 Everton
11 Arsenal	12 Everton
13 Arsenal	14 Everton
15 Arsenal	16 Everton
17 Arsenal	18 Everton
19 Arsenal	20 Everton

Boxing

1 Herbie Hide	2 Dick Ryan
3 Herbie Hide	4 Dick Ryan
5 Herbie Hide	6 Dick Ryan
7 Herbie Hide	8 Dick Ryan
9 Herbie Hide	10 Dick Ryan
11 Herbie Hide	12 Dick Ryan
13 Herbie Hide	14 Dick Ryan
15 Herbie Hide	16 Dick Ryan
17 Herbie Hide	18 Dick Ryan
19 Herbie Hide	20 Dick Ryan

Johnstone holds his nerve, page 13

Dallaglio protests his fitness, page 14

England A wrap up series victory, page 14

Advocaat takes over at Rangers, page 15

SportsGuardian

West Indies v England: third Test hangs in the balance

Mike Selvey feels the tension mounting in Port of Spain as Atherton's men are held up 44 short of a win that would level the series

England on edge as cracks begin to show

THE rain showers which skittered from the Maraval Hills to puddle Queen's Park Oval yesterday afternoon left the third Test match — and with it England's realistic interest in the remainder of the series — in the balance.

When, for the third time in the afternoon, the fleet of groundsmen, yellow-oiled and sou'westered like trawlermen, had hauled the covers on to the playing area, England, chasing 225 to win and 52 without loss overnight, had slipped and slithered to 181 for four, 44 tantalising runs short, after Brian Lara and his henchmen had begun to turn the screw.

All the old doubts, all the had memories of Trinidad Tests — including the one in 1990 when last-day lunchtime rain deprived them of probable victory — were surely creeping back into the English psyche and nerves, without question, would have been jangling like cowbells.

For a time, while Mike Atherton and Alec Stewart were continuing their work of the previous evening, and the

spark had not ignited in the West Indies attack, the game, remarkably, looked to be England's for the taking. But after the pair had reduced the target to double figures by adding 129 for the first wicket — the fifth time they have reached three figures in Tests together and the third time in the Caribbean — four wickets fell for the addition of 39 more runs including those both of Atherton, for 49, and Stewart, whose brilliant 83 took exactly five hours.

David Lloyd, to the groundsmen's chagrin, had removed the covers himself at 7am to ensure that the pitch had maximum time to breathe after its night under plastic sheeting. It certainly appeared to do the trick, for instead of playing like a typical Caribbean fourth-day surface, with the increased, and ultimately apparent, likelihood of insidiously low bounce, it might have been a first-day pitch, so easily did Atherton and Stewart take on the West Indies bowling.

The previous evening, it had been the captain who had taken on the mantle of run-scorer while Stewart, unchar-



Low blow for England... West Indies joy is unconfined as Nasser Hussain is out low to a delivery from spinner Carl Hooper that shot along the ground

PHOTOGRAPH: REBECCA NADEN

acteristically, bedded in. The roles reverted to type in the morning session, however, with Stewart waiting three overs to score his first run in more than an hour's batting, and then playing quite beautifully with Walsh driven

through mid-on and cuffed through the off-side as if it were a village bobby clipping a scrumper round the ear. Kenny Benjamin, too, was eased precisely through extra cover off the back foot, and later was driven to the bound-

ary twice in an over, the second of them hammered square with Caribbean panache. The bowling, at times, looked relatively pedestrian, although when 39, Atherton survived a fierce chance off Walsh to Stuart Williams in the gully.

Stewart brought up both his 50 — after three hours' batting — and the century partnership with the same dab to third man and by lunch, taken an over early because of the first rain shower, they had taken the score on to 122. This may have been England, but victory seemed certain.

The West Indian capacity to fight back when the odds are longest is part of their heritage, however, and the afternoon session, under overcast skies, saw them begin the process of reeling England in. Lara began to manipulate his bowlers — Ambrose one over, then Walsh one, then Ambrose again — setting his fields deep. And slowly, as the two great pace howlers

cranked up their effort, England began to crack. Fifteen minutes beyond lunch, after almost four hours, Atherton had gone, almost run out from one ball and caught behind pushing outside off stump at the next. Walsh began his aeroplane celebration. Atherton has

Scoreboard

WEST INDIES First innings 159 (Frasar 5-40, Caddick 5-67).
ENGLAND First innings 145 (Ambrose 5-25).
WEST INDIES Second innings 210 (J C Adams 52, Hooper 4-77, Fraser 4-40).
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ENGLAND Second innings 181 (J C Adams 52, Hooper 4-77, Fraser 4-40).

now made only two half-centuries in 17 innings since his match-winning century against New Zealand a year ago, and none at all in his last 13 knocks. But the stand had shown the way.

John Crawley was unable to maintain the momentum, however. This is a fellow struggling to establish his credentials at No. 3 and Lara, knowing only attacked instinctively and mercilessly. Crawley, on teeterhooks, lasted half an hour before he was senselessly run out attempting a second to cover where there was one and three-quarters.

It was the catalyst that started a chain reaction. After playing so fluently, Stewart had found himself under pressure, his flow of runs drying up, throttled by Lara's stragulation fields and the renewed efforts of Walsh and Ambrose. Until then it had been a faultless innings, but now he seemed vulnerable.

Walsh smelled blood. With his concentration in tatters,

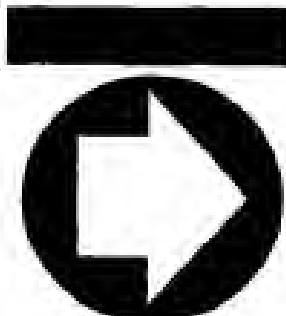
Stewart hung out his bat and edged to Carl Hooper, a solitary maroon-hatted sentinel at slip, only for this most competent of coppers to ground a straightforward catch. Walsh, who was giving it his all, beat the ground in frustration, wondering if the moment of crisis was over. Four balls later he got his answer, as Stewart flicked once more outside off stump, and this time the wicketkeeper David Williams made no mistake.

Hussain was now joined by Graham Thorpe. With Thorpe's thumping off drive off Walsh, and Hussain lofting Hooper high and straight, the pair appeared to have broken the spell, adding 16. But Hussain, unlucky to have been given out in the first innings, must have tripped over a black cat and smashed the mirror he was carrying, for the ball he got from Hooper, which might have left a small trail in the dust, could not have been played even with a shovel.

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The Disability Discrimination Act protects disabled people against discrimination. The employment part of the Act currently affects companies with 20 or more staff, but the Government is consulting on whether this limit should be lowered to cover smaller organisations like your own. To have your say, get hold of a consultation document by calling 0345 622 633, textphone 0345 622 644 quoting SEG2, or fill in this coupon and send it to DDA Information Line, FREEPOST MID 02164 Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 9BR.

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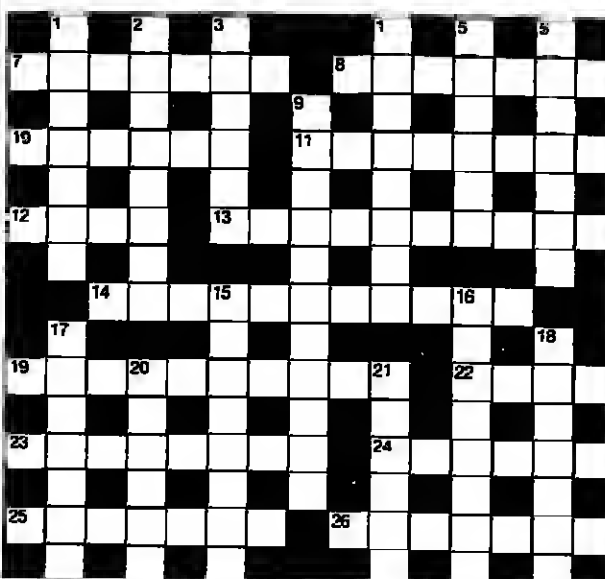


"What I didn't know is that in between pleading with me, she flew back to France to report it as an assault, and she went to a photo booth to have those photos done, and then to see Max Clifford to try to sell her story. She had four different lawyers trying to get money out of me. It's all a load of shit."
Katharine Viner meets Geoffrey Boycott

G2 front

Guardian Crossword No 21,200

Set by Gemini

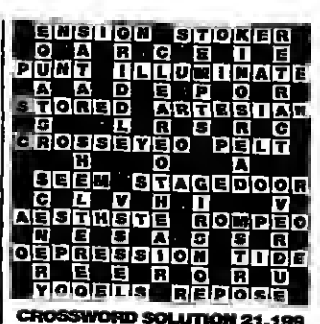


Across

- 7 Meat spread all round the bone (7)
- 8 Area round stumps gives cricket side scope (7)
- 10 Buyer's right established in court (6)
- 11 Trouble in running domestic supplies (3,5)
- 12 Fall to make the crease (4)
- 13 Dress shirt? A gent's dicky, rather (10)
- 14 Open court is laid out for legal proceedings (11)
- 19 Short page circulated about North Report (10)
- 22 Mouth washed out into vessel (4)
- 23 At once, a double whammy (4-4)
- 24 Said to sunbathe in a bodice (6)

Down

- 25 Miser gave but a couple of pounds (4-3)
- 26 Dogfight is what he trains for (7)
- 1 Aircraft blown up? (7)
- 2 Back put off goalkeeper (3)
- 3 Slams cuts in Labour's latest squeeze (6)
- 4 Bound over — harsh conclusion! (8)
- 5 Surf-rider heading inshore (6)
- 6 Waited overhead without a stirring (7)
- 9 Cheat Chang? (5-6)
- 15 Remarkably, friend gives token support (8)
- 16 Proposes to replace those who object (8)
- 17 Object to a pin-up of Signorina, say (7)



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